

# Maclean's

Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

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**SEPARATISM  
AFTER BOUCHARD**

## Animal Wrongs

A Maclean's investigation  
into the booming trade  
in exotic pets reveals  
serious threats to public  
health and safety—  
and to the animals  
themselves

Life as a pet nearly  
killed lioness Subira

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# Managing Editor



## His charisma made him dangerous

**Ruminating** through the mental notes of 30-plus years (mostly) on the fringes of national politics, a journalist awakes by the dawn number and wisdom of his memories involving the politics and politicians of Quebec. There was Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau's emboldened confrontation with Premier Daniel Johnson at the constitutional conference in February, 1969—a clash that propelled Trudeau down the road to 24 Sussex Drive, The RLC Café of October, 1970. Premier Robert Bourassa's vacillation and ultimate rejection of the historic (or so it seemed then) Victoria constitutional charter of June, 1971.

The electricity in the air at the Paul Sauvé Arena that night in November, 1976, with the election of René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois. The euphoria that swept the land when Lévesque's brand of sovereignty was defeated in the 1980 referendum. Trudeau's passion of



Bouchard, compelling

the Constitution, over Lévesque's objections, in 1981. The signing in June, 1987, of the historic (or so it seemed) Meech Lake accord ("Today we welcome Quebec back to the Canadian constitutional family," Prime Minister Brian Mulroney intoned. Presumably) Meech's messy demise three years later. The rejection by national referendum of the Charlottetown accord in 1992. The stunning 1993 election of the Bloc Québécois as the Official Opposition in Parliament, under the leadership of Lucien Bouchard. His near-death experience with flesh-eating disease in 1994. The country's near-death experience a year later as the Bouchard-inspired Ys forces cause

within a whisker of winning the second Quebec referendum. His accession to the premiership of Quebec in January, 1996.

Bouchard ranked with Trudeau and Lévesque as Canada's three most compelling political figures of the past half-century. Without him, the chaotic quagmire of the sovereignty movement drops to nearly nil. That charisma was crucial. It—plus his ability to project an air of reasonableness—made him, as Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow put it, a singularly effective agent for the destruction of the country. Now, as he takes his leave, there's a real temptation to have a sigh of relief, to surmise that separation is on its last legs. Certainly, it has seen better days, as Bouchard recognizes. The effluent nationalists who came of political age in the Quiet Revolution are passing from the scene, while younger Quebecers, focused on more interesting things, don't need

the aggression of the sovereignty struggle.

The loss of Bouchard is a heavy blow to the separatist cause, but not a mortal one. There will be new leaders, new ideas, new "outrages," new drums, new elections—and, of course, new memories.

*Stephen Hume*

represents Bouchard as he continues on from the Managing Editor

## Newsroom Notes

### Wild things

**It's no wonder** that Associate Editor Susan McClelland chose to open this week's cover story with Subito, a lion at a rural Ontario wildlife sanctuary (page 34). It was after hearing about Subito and life as a pet—the animal suffered terrible abuse at the hands of several owners before being rescued—that McClelland began investigating the

trade in wildlife. Working with Life Editor James Deacon, McClelland discovered a multi-million-dollar industry that sells thousands of animals, including rare and extremely dangerous species, across Canada every year.

The lion that dooed fell to assist the massive and illegal trade in animal body parts used in fashion and medicine. And since Ontario's endangered species



McClelland, Deacon: show

legislation died when the election was called in the fall, there's little to protect animals from abuse, or citizens from keeping dangerous pets that may be improperly housed.

"I thought when I first got started that the lion was an isolated case," McClelland says. "But there are thousands of similar stories out there." And sadly, very few of those stories have happy endings.

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# The Mail

## Health-care troubles

**All power** to Dr. Heidi Omer for seriously considering a change from family medicine to running a bed-and-breakfast ("At the breaking point," Cover, Dec. 25/Jan. 1). She is not alone in feeling frustration with a medical system that has in no way kept up with demand for services. I am also 40 years old (graduated from medical school in the United Kingdom in 1985 and came to Canada in 1991). For six years, I worked as a last-year specialist at the Ottawa Hospital. In June, 2000, I resigned my position and I am now in my first year of engineering at Carleton University. My main reason for leaving medicine was that I found it increasingly difficult to provide the care to patients that should be available and that I am trained to deliver. Over the past five or six years, there has been a dramatic (and not unexpected) increase in patient volume together with an equally dramatic increase in the severity of these older patients' diseases. There has not been a comparable increase in manpower to handle this escalation. As a result, many physicians are working longer and harder, with little hope of relief in the near future. I believe it can only be a



Omer: Little hope of relief

matter of time before patients begin to fall through the cracks of a system where doctors can, at times, simply put off their sickliest individuals, while attention to less-urgent problems is routinely delayed. I miss medicine a great deal. I miss my patients and my colleagues and the satisfaction that comes from being able to do a job well. However, I am unlikely to return to medicine unless and until it is understood that doctors and nurses cannot simply be wrong day

Michael Argent,  
Ottawa, Ont.

**Your feature** concerning doctor burnout reminds me of the prevailing attitude in most government cities in Canada. It's too little, too late. All the doctors I know have had it. There are no incentives to stay in the system. Why do you think large numbers of new medical grads in Ontario are leaving and why so many full-time docs will quit or settle in the next five years? Seventy-hour weeks, \$26.50 per office visit, demanding patients, six-month wait for an MRI, no hospital beds, constant harassment by government officials, no pension or standard benefit package, and a 50-per-cent personal income tax rate. The handwriting is on the wall—ignore it at your peril!

Dr. Karl P. Duda, Toronto

## Inefficient Canada

**I moved here** from the United States three years ago, and I can assure you that Canada is appreciably worse than the United States was 25 years ago ("Then and now," Cover, Dec. 25/Jan. 1). At least twice a day I find myself saying with great force to some apologetic member of the alleged service community of presumed employees in Canada: "This is just like doing business with the damned Russians!" There is a shocking lack of up-to-date products in most of the stores; there are hundreds of shops in Toronto that don't even know they are out of something until a customer asks for it and have no idea when they will be resupplied. It is impossible to get anything delivered or serviced outside of 9 to 5, Monday through Friday. And the volume of whining is deafening. When I lived in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1976, the bus drivers crossing at Fort Erie, Ont., always said: "We are now entering Canada, set your watch back 20 years." Now, it's 25 years. By 2050, it may be 100 years. The only thing I'll do better than we did it in the U.S.A. is apologetic. In fact, that should be over every gateway to Canada: "Welcome to Canada. We're sorry."

Elizabeth Shaw, Toronto

**I left nursing** in the mid-1960s because I wasn't able to spend enough time with my patients. I have never regretted this decision. From what I see, read, hear about and have experienced, working conditions have severely deteriorated since then. Health-care professionals should be treated like human beings. They should be allowed to work

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### Letters to the Editor

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# Overture

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Edited by Anthony Wilton-Smith  
with Shaunde Deemel



## Over and Under Achievers

### 'Earthlings, stay home!'

All the nouns are chosen to print: The PM's best birthday gift? Baby, is that your jeep? Alenax loves earthlings! And a new way to monkey around!

◆ **Lullaby:** Old theme song, *God Save the Queen*. Now theme, *Californians, Here I Come*. Sonneteer's gift: a new way to monkey around!

◆ **Quebecer:** Quebec poem quote on PM's birthday. Now what will he wish for next year?

◆ **"Beauty is best":** PM's latest series offers couples choice to cheat on each other with waiting posse of attractive, available angles. It's surreal in guys who think these letters to *Prudhomme* are true.

◆ **Space alien:** Astronaut scientist says extraterrestrials likely

exist—but won't bother contacting us because we're too dumb. And they haven't even sent an episode of *Star Trek* yet.

◆ **Designer monkey:** Scientists create the world's first genetically modified primate—an instant monkey OK, or maybe the alien will want to see one.

◆ **Jeep strategy:** Manufacturer of world's most famous SUV will make vehicles for babies. Because it's never too early to teach your tot about road rage.

## HOT DOG

### Here comes the spawn

David Schreager, a Pizza Hut worker in Falls Church, Va., says there are months when he has survived on minimal amounts of food so he can purchase every action figure created by Todd McFarlane. Schreager, 25, whose room is filled with 1,475 figurines, is a die-hard fan of the 39-year-old Calgary-born comic-book artist and toy maker. The dedication of Schreager and the accomplishments of McFarlane himself can be seen in *The Devil You Know: Inside the Mind of Todd McFarlane*—a profile that airs on CBC on Jan. 23 at 7 p.m.

Kennan Vaughan, a Toronto documentary filmmaker and business journalist, approached McFarlane about making the film after reading about him in *Forbes*. "Here was this successful Canadian comic-book artist who was a corporate rival," says Vaughan, "and I had never heard of him before." This was in 1996, before McFarlane used his profile with the \$3-million (U.S.) purchase of Mark McGwire's record-setting 70th home-run baseball in 1997.

McFarlane was a promising baseball player until he hurt his ankle in college and turned to drawing. After landing a job at Marvel Comics, he revitalized the Spider-Man character. He then moved his own publication, *Spawn*—currently the No. 1 comic book in North America. And since 1994, he has sold over 50 million action figures—including NHL players, movie characters and heavy-metal models. McFarlane says such success is only "a byproduct of doing a good job with art." But Vaughan insists he is a brilliant businessman who "doesn't take no for an answer." And, like many of his fans, McFarlane remains a boy at heart who loves his toys.



McFarlane's Spawn action-figure fantasy world

## SPOKEN WORD

### They got the beat

This past August, British Columbia poet Sharie Koyanaka made a slam dunk. Then an Okanagan University College student, he travelled to Providence, R.I., for the annual National Poetry Slam and won first prize. As a compromise, Koyanaka performed two original poems—explains with finger-snapping and sometimes expansive gestures, but free of puns, contrived and music. "It's not like a regular poetry reading with people sipping wine and wearing black boots," says Koyanaka, 25. "It's rowdy—people yell and scream for their favourite poems."

Canadian slammers are part of a burgeoning alternative literary community. It also includes spoken-word artists, who perform their poetry—often accompanied by music and props—and electronic literature writers. The latter use Web sites to display their work—allowing the audience to view alternative versions of their poems or even help with the writing. The current scene, says Paul Senneker, a spoken and electronic words program officer for the Canada Council, "is a direct relative of the '60s beat generation and



poet like Jack Kerouac. In the '60s, it took the form of poetry. Then it moved in the '70s and '80s with disco stuff. In the '90s, it came back with punk, grunge and rap."

The program offers \$450,000 in funding annually to French and English literary and electronic performance artists. Its further of Montreal is using \$100,000 of the program's funding to release a compilation of spoken-word performances by women. Ferrier believes with this program in place, the community, "is going to really blossom." But don't break out the beer just yet.

**Related links:** <http://www.poetryslam.com> (U.S. National Poetry Slam site) <http://www.nationalpoetryslam.com> (Vancouver electronic literature site)

Kerouac: *anxious to a new batch of poets*

## Overbites

He told her that she had no right to go against nature. So I have to advise that in a way, I owe my life to that poem."

—Colleen Olson tells how a local parish priest convinced his mother, who already had 13 children, not to abort him

"In May and June of 1957, in Toronto, a baby whose mother had been called to the attention of the Catholic Children's Aid Society and who was living with his mother in a group home, died of starvation. How could that possibly happen?"

—Ontario Crown Attorney John McKeown describes the death of 35-day-old Jordan Brown. McKeown's mother, Brown, and his mother were later charged with causing neglect and death. A judge later dropped the charges.

## Victoria's secret: she's not so dour

Montana Queen Victoria and many people perceive a dour woman in provincial mourning for her husband, Prince Albert. But at the ceremony of her death—on June 22, 1901—many other facts about Canada's first post-Confederation Queen.

◆ Her father, Edward, Duke of Kent, died when she was eight months old. Victoria was raised in great poverty by her German mother.

◆ She was 18 when her uncle, William IV died and she became the new monarch. Her reign would last 63½ years.

◆ She was a gifted pianist, and Felix Mendelssohn said she had the finest amateur singing voice he ever heard.

◆ There were seven assassination attempts on her life—the first in 1840 and the last in 1882.

◆ Through the marriages of her nine children into the royal houses of Europe, her descendants

are now on the thrones of Britain, Denmark, Norway, Spain and Sweden.

◆ Her descendants are so numerous (59 grandchildren alone) that the first 50 people in line to the British throne are from just one grandchild, George V.

◆ Canadian connections: while Victoria never visited Canada, her father did military service here, and one of her sons and a son-in-law were governors general.

Patrick Thibault



Martin Luther King Jr. speaks for peace

## Sound like anyone you know?

"The rumour of his impending retirement, which cropped up frequently, were never true, but they were seldom groundless. Some of them followed proved circumstances in which [prime minister Lester] Pearson made no secret of how weary he was, and how rule and his his new job seemed to him. He hung on, his friends suggest, mainly because he couldn't stand the idea of Paul Martin [Sr.] taking over the party."

—from an April 6, 1963, Maclean's article entitled "The pecking is almost over—finally—certainly of Lester B. Pearson"



## Over to You Michael Snider

# A coldhearted Canada

It was the last day before Christmas vacation, and the weather in Saskatoon was already in tone. Office colleagues in Toronto laughed me, with giddy chuckles, every 20 minutes or so with updates on the aerie frame that had settled there. I was off to spend a week with my wife's family—a pleasant prospect in itself, but my co-workers had succeeded in turning my every thought to the cold. I kept imagining a TV weatherman pointed with pointer on the map, inspiring the pun that was my destination: "Oh yeh, baby!" he shouts, a married guy splitting his face "It's cold, because it's ya. Colder than a witch with loose andas, colder than your mother's place after that Grade 8 report card."

In fact, they talked about the cold in the airport, in the boarding lounge, in the wait inside, behind and in front of us. The pilot talked about it in his pre-flight address, apologetically telling us that by the time we landed it would be minus 32 degrees. The reception from the 16-ones was warm, all about their new winter coats—and how cold it was "But it's a dry cold," they said.

Out into the Saskatoon night, I drew a sharp breath and felt shards of pain. Jack Frost, rather than nipping, was now into stabbing. But amid the shock, I had a revelation: the cold was spectacularly apfeking. Even as I wheeled my way to my mother-in-law's car, I was enjoying the cold—and you, as a Canadian, probably understand what I mean.

As the son of a diplomat, I spent my first 18 cold years living in milder climates across Europe and the Caribbean, feeding off bells about igloo dwellings and, conversely, gapping the lack of arctic fun when I mentioned how troublesome those snow lands can be. Through life at home and abroad, I be-

came aware of how much we as Canadians define ourselves by the severity of our weather—and that, whether we admit it or not, we love the cold. We wear it like a badge of honour, as though our winter defines us as a resilient, determined people. We're the true North strong and free, thank you. We all relate to the cold one way or another, whether by embracing a robust game of shanny on an outdoor rink, or the folly of rocking a tampon to a frozen rental pool. And while the cold divides us as we assess indoors from each other, it unites us in shared rituals: we all know what it's like to get up early to clear the driveway before work, the shovel's scrape echoes in the still morning air, and breath clouds and hangs longer than normal in the dark. It makes me think of a line from the poem "There's a Thing We Love" by Jean Besset: There's a thing we love to think of through the bitter winter hours/For it isn't a warmth within us—but the fair young land of ours.

But every year when the mercury starts falling, we act as though we're visitors from an equatorial island, talking about the freeze as if it were something new. And understandably so—however much we try and prepare ourselves for the inevitable chill, our bodies seem to forget the shock of minus 30 (that's minus 51 with the wind chill, you know). The only saving grace is that we joke ourselves on delirious every cold snap and bravely surviving another winter with another bit our sanity get and unwavering resolve—well, this and an automatic car heater—something every igloo dweller should have.

*Three days, Michael Snider spent some in Toronto. Guest submissions may be sent to [overtoyou@toronto.com](mailto:overtoyou@toronto.com) or faxed to (416) 596-7738. We reserve regional or all species.*

## Overture

### PASSAGES

**Moving:** Jeff Douglas, the Nova Scotia actor who starred in the popular "I Am Canadian" beer ads for Molson, is heading to Hollywood. The 30-armed genius, not genius Douglas national publicity, a *People* magazine spread and a role in the new *Dennis Washington* film, *John Q. Douglas*, 28, will be angling for television roles as it is currently pilot season in Tinseltown.



**Died:** Victor Basso, 65, was an internationally recognized business who was a regular guest with several European opera companies. The native of Windsor, Ont., was living in Germany and Belgium and moved last year after performing in the Salzburg Festival. He died in Ulm, Germany, of Stry-Droger syndrome, a neurological disorder.

**Arrested:** Until she was caught at Toronto's Pearson airport, De Jacques Robinson, 41, had been a fugitive from the United States for 16 years. Robinson shot her lover, Washington doctor Henry Garvey, in 1984 and was facing second-degree murder charges when she disappeared. Robinson had been living in the Bahamas before moving to Ottawa in April to study at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. Maryland authorities said they will seek extradition.

**Reoperation:** Former U.S. president Ronald Reagan, 89, underwent surgery to repair a hip broken in a fall at his home in the Bel-Air section of Los Angeles. The operation was performed at the state hospital where Reagan, 69, year-old daughter, Maureen, is being treated for melanoma. Reagan suffered from Alzheimer's disease and his condition has been said to be worsening.



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# Giving Up the Struggle

By Anthony Wilson-Smith

On Dec. 13, 1995—the day he left federal politics on his way to become premier of Quebec—Lucien Bouchard asked for and received a meeting with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien. Remarkably, it was the first private meeting between two of the most dominant figures in Canadian politics. Their session was booked to last 10 minutes; it ran 35 minutes over. They talked about shared concerns, like Quebec's economy, and shared acquisitions, like their berberies, both medical researchers. At one point, Chrétien denounced the intemperance rhetoric Bouchard had dished at him during the more reformist campaign. Bouchard, for once, held his temper in check. He confessed later he hadn't realized his words had been so hurtful, and vowed to try to avoid intemperance in future.

And, for the next five years, he mostly did. When Bouchard delivered his startling resignation announcement last week, his eloquent speech offered clear evidence of why Brian Mulroney, in happier days, once told Ronald Reagan that Bouchard was "the most eloquent French-Canadian I know." It was easy for the moment to forget that this was the easily aggravated man who at various times over the years called other premiers "monks" and "idiots," once described Chrétien as a "murder" to Quebec and accused pro-federalist businesspeople of "gutting" the province. His second-to-last remarks in his announcement, before thanking his family, were an apology to anyone he had hurt: "I assure them it wasn't done through meanness or lack of respect."



There is no reason to doubt that—and no changing the fact that Bouchard will be remembered to the politicians who espoused intemperance—and avoided them—more powerfully than any other of his era. Alternately sly and unshelving when he first entered politics, he was, by the time he left, arguably the most compelling speaker in Canada in either language. When he arrived in Ottawa after his run as attorney-in-fact in 1988 to take up a cabinet position in Mulroney's Tory government, he was meted by many in his own party for his short attention span and expensive tastes—he almost

*Singing goodbye: a man of eloquence and powerful enemies*

instantaneously ordered \$35,000 in office furnishings. But he retained into a leader who maintained complex policy briefs in short order, routinely worked 12-hour days, and lived a Spartan life away from his family, sleeping in a room little bigger than a jail cell in a soulless government-owned building in Quebec City known as "The Bastion."

Ironically, it is a scarier which side it happens about his knowing—federalists, who regarded him as the last potent weapon in the sovereignist side's depleted arsenal, or hard-core sovereignists, who derided him as a quasi-federalist. For federalists, the good news is that no-one in sovereignist circles can come close to matching Bouchard in charisma or intellectual stature. By law, a new PQ premier isn't bound to call another election before 2003—but will face heavy pressure to do so well before that. Suddenly, federalists can think nostalgically about a return to provincial power with Jean Chrétien's Liberals.

But federalists' joy should be tempered by other effects of Bouchard's departure. Within the PQ, he insisted not only calls to declare French the only legal language on public signs, but also efforts to limit access to English-language CEGEPs. He was a willing, effective participant in federal-provincial conferences, Team Canada's economic trips, and any co-operative event in which he felt Quebec could gain. A new premier will face PQ pressure to do as Jacques Parizeau did before Bouchard—and beyond federal-provincial events.

As well, Quebec's businesspeople have cause to be nervous. Bouchard swayed not so the business community, warning federalists to head some provincial Crown corporations and commissions. These actions helped calm the economic climate after the race-riot federalists won in the referendum, and Quebec's economy has been booming in recent years. Last week, Bouchard ripped several business leaders of his

departure plans a day in advance, so they could prepare to reassure customers. But many PQ members have leftist leanings, and a successor will face pressure to pay more attention to their views.

The narrow possibility is that a leadership race could split the PQ over ethnicity issues. Bouchard always said that anyone who lives in the province is a full-fledged Quebecer. That vision is not shared by all sovereignists, as was evident in the recent Yves Michaud affair: after the longtime separatist made several remarks with anti-Semitic overtones, he was censured by the national assembly but vigorously defended by some PQers.

The fact that such a debate exists at all illustrates what may be the party's biggest problem: it used to be hip in Quebec to belong to the PQ, but no longer. These days, the province's economic mood, Montreal, is as multicultural as Toronto and Vancouver. Many young people move effortlessly between English, French and sometimes a third language. And while polls show most young francophones favour laws enforcing the primacy of French, they strongly oppose ethnic distinctions. The debate over who is a real Quebecer isn't old—and that discomfited also fits the PQ's ageing membership.

It isn't hard, then, to see why Bouchard is leaving. The

## With his party divided and support for Quebec sovereignty waning, Lucien Bouchard calls it quits

wonder may be why he stayed that long. Reviled by some and revered by others, he sometimes seemed to find in the electricity of emotions. But at other times, he bore the loss of privacy that comes with a very public job—and the sacrifices.

They include a once-valued friendship: when Bouchard broke with Mulroney over efforts to urge the Meech Lake constitutional accord in 1990, it ended a relationship of 30 years. The two men no longer speak. In Bouchard's autobiography, *On the Record*, his candiding line dealt with that break, and his garble on the "decree that put as one door closed on part of my past one evening in May, 1990, so another and better door will soon be opening for the future of my nation."

But with his departure announced, Bouchard effectively admitted that will not happen any more soon. It nearly did in 1995, when he took control of the Via campaign with three weeks to go and miraculously moved it to within a half-percentage point of victory. He can take solace in the fact that there is, despite everything, no other politician who could have done what he did. Now, with his retirement, federalists take solace in that as well.

Is the sovereignty movement finished? To vote: [www.theglobe.com](http://www.theglobe.com)



# A Dark Day for the PQ

Bouchard's sudden departure leaves a void that sovereigntists will find difficult to fill

By Brenda Branswell in Quebec City

With his expressive, sometimes acerbic personality, Quebec Premier Jacques Bouchard has never been good at hiding his mood. Before Christmas, on the heels of a contentious fall legislative session, some colleagues found him preoccupied. "He seemed ill at ease and nervous," recalled Parti Québécois MNA Claude Lachance. "I felt that something serious was in the works." In fact, he suspected that he was considering quitting politics. Yes, Bouchard had made no secret of his frustration with warring Parti Québécois candidate Yves Michaud and his controversial remarks about Jews. Yes, family matters also weighed on his mind: the father of two young sons, he turned 62 on Dec. 22. Possibly, some observers thought, he would see new signs in the next election, due in the next two years. But resign *now*? On Thursday, PQ MNAs filed out of the caucus meeting, tense and shocked as Bouchard had just that. As backbencher Mathieu Rheaume put it, "It's like a blow to the solar plexus."

Hoped-for elections might say a loud and punchy Bouchard's resignation shocked the sovereignty movement, his shaken, red-eyed caucus watched his announcement knowing full well the impact of his decision. Despite a series of setbacks, Bouchard remains a popular figure in Quebec, better liked, in fact, than his party, according to opinion polls. And that makes sovereignty seem all the more elusive and the PQ's re-election chances more difficult with his departure. Bouchard will say as he pretends until the party chooses a new leader this spring. None of the three more often-cited potential successors—cabinet ministers Bernard Landry, Pauline Marois and François Lévesque—match Bouchard's charisma. "It's a big loss," says Gilles Gervais, head of the PQ organization in the Quebec City region. "He was our best player, our best sovereignty salesman."



In the wake of Bouchard's astonishing performance during the 1995 referendum campaign, when he was still leader of the federal Bloc Québécois, sovereigntists latched onto him as their best bet for a winning Yes vote in the future. But try as he might, Bouchard as premier never managed to rouse nationalist passions to the same degree. Many chalked up the public indifference to constitutional fatigue. But the PQ's native hardliners pointed the finger at Bouchard, accusing him of not promoting separation. In his resignation speech, Bouchard conceded failure on the sovereignty front. "I recognize that my efforts to quickly solve the debate on the national question were in vain," he declared.

But in resigning, he did not disguise his disappointment with his provincial caucus. He described Quebec as "inherently impossible" in the face of what he viewed as successive federal assaults on its power. Bouchard opposed the social union framework requested by Ottawa and the other provinces. He objected to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's Millennium Scholarship program as an incursion into



With Best in 1995, Best with Alexandre and Simon in 1996 (opposite), premier

has divided his time between his office in Quebec City and the Outremont apartment he shares with wife Audrey and their two sons. Nothing that his years were numbered, Bouchard said. "I also want to live fully the marvelous adventure of educating my boys, who are 11 and nine years old. Alexandre and Simon need me and I need to get back to them."

The Michaud affair also grieved Bouchard. The longtime party activist narrowly escaped a star by claiming that Jews, as a result of the Holocaust, believe they are the only people who have suffered. He called the Jewish-rights organization, B'nai B'rith, anti-sovereigntist and extremist. And to illustrate an example of the anti-sovereignty ethnic vote, he referred to a dozen polls in a largely Jewish Montreal suburb where everyone voted No in the 1995 referendum. Bouchard fired back with an impassioned condemnation that won him praise in Montreal's Jewish community, but brought more grief from Michaud's outspoken supporters. On Wednesday, they ran a full-page ad in *Le Devoir* supporting Michaud. Serge Miron, Quebec's public security minister, issued the commentaries was more than a just answer for Bouchard. "I've got the wear blow in his caucus," said Miron. The lingering bitterness explains Bouchard's speech. "I have to stop for continuing any discussion whatsoever on the Holocaust," he declared, "and the role of ethnic and cultural communities."

Scarily, Harris, who was Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's chief of staff during the rise and fall of the Meech Lake constitutional accord, had more reason than most to resent Bouchard, a former Tory cabinet minister whose assault on the past in 1990 helped kill the deal. In his first thoughts on hearing news of the resignation of his ally-turned-enemy in these old constitutional waters were personal rather than political. Harris' late father served in Quebec provincial politics and later in a federal MP through the late 1940s, and, like Bouchard, had a leg amputated. "That's not easy," Harris said, recalling his father's weariness and lingering pain when he

provincial jurisdiction over education. And, most of all, he sensed the federal Clarity Act, which in the event of a future referendum would require a clear majority on a clear question before Ottawa would recognize a Yes victory.

Bouchard alluded to other causes for stepping down. The most compelling, judging from his trembling voice, was a need to spend more time with his family. For years, Bouchard



With Charest in 1996  
a resignation that rocked  
the sovereignty movement

son-in-law, led the Quebec premier as "an able parliamentarian who has fought for his beliefs with passion and determination." Among the inevitable tributes from the premiers, Mike Harris was one of the most effusive. "We worked very well together on issues that really matter to Canadians, including Ossington and Quebecers, its health care, postsecondary education, its social programs," the Ontario premier said, describing Bouchard as a "strong ally."

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein also deflected praise, noting how Bouchard played a more active role in intergovernmental conferences than his two immediate predecessors. "The first premier's conference I attended was with Robert Bourassa and he flew in and made a statement and flew out again," Klein told *Maclean's*. "Even though he was a federalist, there was some meaningful participation." Jacques Parizeau, said Klein, was the star. "Again, he would fly in, make a big show, bluff and puff—and leave." But Bouchard, he added, always maintained this as long as Quebec was still part of the country and Quebec. "So he participated fully and in a meaningful way in government and first minister's conferences," Klein said. As for the effect of his resignation on Canada, Klein and Raffy "do not good for the country."



With Harris in 1999, with Brian and Canadian  
Ministry in 1998 (top), a Montreal anti-PQ  
demonstration in 1996 (right) constitutional fatigue



## Canada Special Report

world come home and finally remove his prosthesis at the end of a long day on the floor of Quebec's national assembly at the House of Commons. "It's painful."

But all his personal sympathy, though, Harty was blunt in his assessment of Bouchard's political reserves. He flatly rejects the notion that Bouchard was acting from deep conviction when he rejected modifications to the Meech Lake agreement that were worked out by Jean Charest in the spring of 1990—and that Bouchard himself would dilute the deal. Instead, Harty contends that Bouchard made a "tactical calculation" that the nation of the second world set back Quebec's steady march towards greater and greater autonomy. He feared, Harty charges, that the second would be seen as an end to a process and not just one step on the route to more autonomy.



Landry's potential successor  
cannot match his charisma

Last week, pundits recognized Bouchard's considerable political talent and took note of his fading, such as his penchant for theatrical outbursts. In the end, a significant part of his political legacy will be his administrative accomplishments, chief among them the elimination of Quebec's deficit. For all his grievances with Ottawa, Bouchard also established a remarkable working rapport with his peers on the Canadian political scene. His resignation brought an outpouring of praise from across the country—although politicians outside Quebec were inevitably careful to hedge their congratulations by noting, as it is noted today, that they differed with Bouchard over his desire to break up the country. Charest, who was in Florida celebrating his 67th birthday on the day Bouchard made his

announcement, led the Quebec premier as "an able parliamentarian who has fought for his beliefs with passion and determination." Among the inevitable tributes from the premiers, Mike Harris was one of the most effusive. "We worked very well together on issues that really matter to Canadians, including Ossington and Quebecers, its health care, postsecondary education, its social programs," the Ontario premier said, describing Bouchard as a "strong ally."

## MILESTONES

**1988** Steps in Saint-Germain-de-Mont, Que.

**1989** Graduates from Université Laval. Dies (diabetes to Jean Harty) and is buried in the Quebec bar

**1989** Appointed Canadian ambassador to France by Mulroney

**1991** Appointed to the Mulroney cabinet as secretary of state for that same year. He is elected as the Conservative MP for Lac-Saint-Jean in a by-election

**1991** Named economic adviser

**1992** In a letter sent by Mulroney, resigns from the cabinet to act as an independent because of potential changes to the Meech Lake accord

**1991** Successor leader of the newly formed Bloc Québécois

**1994** Undergoes surgery for the removal of his left leg, at mid-thigh to stop the spread of metastatic melanoma, also known as the "fish-eating disease"

**1995** Assumes a large role in the campaign for the sovereignty referendum, which is narrowly lost by separatist forces

**1997** Taken over from Jacques Parizeau as leader of the Parti Québécois and premier of Quebec

**1998** Leads the PQ in another majority government

think Lacien was much more of a moderate than many members of his caucus would have liked. My fear is that his successor might not be. My fear is that his successor might be a militant, radical separatist."

If not Bouchard at the helm, then who? Bernard Landry, 63, the deputy premier and finance minister, is seen as the front-runner, although his age might work against him. Landry has come up with the hardline who must his sovereignty convictions, although he also supported Bouchard's moderate approach on language. Health Minister Pauline Marois, 51, is another genre candidate. She finished second in the 1985 leadership race behind former premier Pierre-Marc Johnson, and has held a series of senior portfolios. Education Minister François Legault, a 43-year-old former Air Transat executive brought into cabinet by Bouchard in 1998, is another possible contender, in spite of his status as a native newspaperman. Many Québécois are acutely conscious of their graying caucus, which could help Legault's chances. "A party that changes its leader," said Jacques Lévesque, the PQ's treasury board chairman, "should not risk the chance to change generations."

Quebec Liberals, meanwhile, have reason to rejoice—at least in the short term. But Liberal caucus chairman Jacques Chagnon thinks the party should step up its organizational efforts to be ready for an election. He expects the new PQ leader will be only one relatively sure, rather than waiting until the mandate expires in 2003. But Chagnon also sees potential bumps ahead for the PQ. "The next leader won't have the same credibility that Bouchard had when he replaced Parizeau," he notes.

As for Bouchard, he gave no hint of his future plans. Colleagues say he intends to raise his children in his home province, his wife is finishing her law degree at McGill and plans to arrive with the Montreal firm of Herman Blake near year's end. Last week, Bouchard's staff denied rumours he has accepted a teaching position in California or a job offer at Montreal-based Bombardier Inc. But Bouchard has shown some aptitude for big business. "I was at a lunch that Bouchard spoke at on 'Wall Street for his year,'" says Harty, who is now chairman in Canada of the international brokerage house Salomon Smith Barney. "He was brilliant. He spoke middle-class-investment-banker language. He was perfect in the ideam."

Bouchard does, after all, have a strong desire to being the premier who closed up Quebec's public finances. If he now makes a jump to the international corporate world, as some have speculated, Harty predicts he will get a warm welcome—despite his sovereignty convictions. "At that level, nobody gives a hoot," he says. But Bouchard, at least, the immediate future may look any. For the party he loves behind, though, the days ahead promise to be difficult.

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With John Golden in Ottawa and Brian Bergman in Calgary

Benoit Aubin

# Messing with the Faith

Lucien Bouchard, the chauvinistic federal minister turned separatist premier, resigned once again from a political job last week, a victim of his own contradictions. He was a dignified actor, albeit one without a state to run. He was an authoritarian premier, feared and respected by his colleagues, and a charismatic figure, adulated by the voting public. But he was not a real PQ leader, not a real leader and perhaps not a real politician either.

As befell a citizen in search of a country, Bouchard has never found a political formation he could call home. He resigned in a spat with the Parti Québécois's more radical wing, in much the same way he quit federal politics after an altercation with English-Canadian nationalists, saying principles are not negotiable. True professional politicians can show flexibility—even spinlessness—in adversity. True leaders do not rule by ultimatums. And true *P Québécois* do not quarrel with the faith, the Holy Gail of *l'indépendance*, and the Dogma that comes with it.

As a federal environment minister, Bouchard made executive decisions of the sort he would later decry as "authoritarian" and "intrusive" as a separatist governor. But in previous lives, he was a labour lawyer and then a diplomat, whose specialty was to find compromises where none seemed to exist. That was enough to make him a suspect in the eyes of his party's core of over-zealous headline dogmatists.

The Parti Québécois is a political anomaly: a governing party that has always put ideology ahead of pragmatism, principles ahead of compromise and its platform at the heart of its populist. It is a political force that was born in opposition, and has remained at one with being the government, one that kills its leaders while they are in power. Lucien Bouchard had a government to run, a deficit to tackle, reforms to make, a violent electorate in a nonviolent province to control with. He walked the narrow line in hand, and resigned to preside over the Cause. That did him in as a PQ leader.

The PQ was born as an ethnic and cultural protest group in the '60s: a groundswell of Quebec francophones bent on improving their future by taking over the only patch of land



they have ever called home and imposing their dominion over it. The fact that that quest revolution has been utterly successful for Quebec francophones—and within the Canadian framework, mind you—has dramatically cooled the initial enthusiasm for a hostile separation among the voters. But that basic sociological fact has been lost on the PQ hardliners. Real faithful never question their faith; they are prepared to preach in the desert, and push separation in the national assembly to all this, whether it sells or not.

The cultural nature of Quebec has changed dramatically as a result of the rise of Canada since the inception of the Parti Québécois in the late-'60s. Quebec is fast becoming the only multi-ethnic, multicultural, French-speaking society in America, something unthinkable 30 years ago. Yet the Parti Québécois has never been able to grow out of the ethnic and cultural ghettos in which it was born. It has been stretching out a hand to the immigrants, and at the same time blaming them for its deficits in the polls, an indictment surely that Bouchard was clearly at odds with.

The Parti Québécois has elevated religious patriotism to the rank of religious authority. Like the Roman Catholic Church in its glory days, it preaches no religion outside of Church. For generations now, public debate in Quebec has been stifled by this mindless package-deal dichotomy "oui." Quebecers are PQ supporters: crisis are automatically branded as federalist and, therefore, suspect.

That is his emotional and dogmatic side, in his public address last Thursday, Bouchard bowed to a fact that has become obvious to all but the aging core of dogmatists who were making his life as party leader miserable. The Parti Québécois is a spent political force. It has achieved its initial purpose, and is now dying from ideological obsolescence. Doubt has contaminated the flock. Whether the PQ collapses, or is born again under a new leader, the Quebec "thing" will not go away, and English Canada will still have to contend with a vocal French-speaking minority concentrated in one distant province. What may change, though, is the deadlock that now exists between the threat of separation or "secession" for Quebec and the Canadian fold.

That is the kind of low-key Bouchard-the-negotiator would have appreciated.



In *l'indépendance*, suspect in the eyes of dogmatists



While drawing a number to set spending order, an election man

Canada

## Seven in the fight

Whoever succeeds Roy Romanow in Saskatchewan will inherit an ailing NDP

By Brian Bergman  
in Saskatoon, Sask.

It was a silence that spoke volumes. During a New Democratic Party forum at the Elbow hall in Saskatoon, Sask., last week, the seven leadership candidates seeking to succeed Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow were presented with written questions from the audience. If elected party leader and premier on Jan. 27, asked one, would any of them consider calling a snap provincial election? Normally eager to scupper to the podium's aid in microphone, all seven candidates remained fairly glad to their fielding mental chaos. Their facial grimaces and body language announced that none of them had any intention of seeking the people's verdict anytime soon. Next question, please.

Still wonder? Just 36 months ago, Romanow's government, first elected in 1991, endured a near-death experience at the polls. The Saskatchewan Party—an amalgam of disaffected Conservatives and Liberals—outraged rural Saskatchewan, took the largest percentage of

the popular vote provincially and came within a whisker of winning office, winning 26 seats, compared with 29 for the NDP and three for the Liberals. A humbled Romanow struck a deal with the Liberal MLAs to form a coalition government. In September, he surrendered his resignation, pending a leadership contest.

Since its near-defeat, the NDP's prospects have, if anything, worsened. Currently, the province's hard-pressed farmers seem unforgiving. "Rural Saskatchewan is not just mad at the NDP's mad at government," says University of Saskatchewan political science John Courtney. The chief beneficiary of their wrath is Elton Hearnshaw, a 48-year-old farmer and one-time Reform MP who took the helm of the Saskatchewan Party in April, 1998.

Hearnshaw's presence was palpable at last week's leadership forum in Saskatoon. Regina and Romanow, a farming community 120 km southwest of Saskatoon. The commodities—former and current NDP cabinet ministers Leona Gilbert, Chris Atkinson, Joanne Cast-

ford, Myrland Sonntag and Buckley Belanger, as well as farm activist Noelle White and lawyer Scott Haida—spent more time attacking Hearnshaw than one another. Among other things, they accused him of being full-blown on preventing health care, destroying the province's hard-earned fiscal stability through reckless tax cuts and otherwise running Saskatchewan into "Alfalfa Farm"—a reference to Hearnshaw's constant refrain that the province must do something to stem the flow of young people to its more prosperous neighbours.

Most of the candidates were much more subdued when describing how they would govern differently from Romanow. It is a delicate point: Romanow, 61, is widely credited with securing the province from bankruptcy after inheriting crippling \$842-million annual deficit from the outgoing Conservatives in 1995. But in the process, he closed hospitals and cut municipal and education funding—policies that often angered traditional NDP supporters.

Ironically, the two poorest four-rooms in the leadership race are the ones most closely associated with Romanow's style of governing. Gilbert, 48, a former minister of health and social services, argues the austerity program was a necessary evil. But now, he adds, "we sit in a position to make more progress on social fronts." Atkinson, 53, an even more pliant cut from the same pragmatic cloth as Romanow. A former law professor, Atkinson served 11 years as an NDP MP before securing a provincial seat and being appointed justice minister in 1999. "To win the next election, we have to build a coalition beyond the hard-core NDP support," he says. "This means appealing to people who will not vote for it if the party takes a turn to the traditional left."

Hearnshaw's assessment of his potential rivals? "None of them really concerns me," he sniffs. Some, he adds, are too and to the Romanow legacy, while others "seem to be trying to win favour with party members by pushing for even bigger government. That just won't work with voters." This month's leadership convention marks the end of one political contest—and the beginning of a far more brutal. ■



## On the Issues Mary Janigan

# The interest rate soap opera

For the elite governing council of the money bank of Canada, that is a tricky time. Before next Tuesday, Jan. 23, at 9 a.m., its seven members, including central bank governor Gordon Thiessen, must decide where they think the Canadian economy is heading—and what they want to do about it. Normally, each session to establish the bank's rate are dull affairs, certainly not stirring enough to tattle a soapie at the bank's public headquarters near Parliament Hill. But at this session, the stakes are high. This is the last gathering that Thiessen will chair before his successor, David Dodge, takes over on Feb. 1. Will Thiessen want to tinker with the rate of six per cent before the new governor decides what to do?

Worse, although the health of the economy could be bettering in the balance, economists cannot even agree on the direction that the bank rate should take. Should it go up, down or stay the same? Even in relation, the Canadian economy remains relatively healthy. Growth remains relatively strong—although private forecasts for 2001 have been edging steadily downward. The unemployment rate even dropped, to 6.8 per cent, in December. And Finance Minister Paul Martin is counting on major tax cuts, which took effect on Jan. 1, to stimulate domestic demand.

But the clear signs of a rather drastic U.S. slowdown have spooked many experts—if only because the United States, at last only, took a whopping 83 per cent of Canadian exports. (And experts in total represent fully 65 per cent of Canada's GDP.) "Canada has been playing catch-up with the United States, always 18 months to two years behind, all through the 1990s," observes University of Western Ontario economist David Laister. "So the new governor must somehow manage the Canadian economy so that it gets through the next 18 months to two years, still expanding, while the United States goes through its downturn. That is going to be really difficult."

So what's a governor to do? A minority of economists point to Canada's November inflation rate of 3.2 per cent—which is slightly beyond the target range of one to three per

cent—and argue that Canada should *increase* its bank rate. At the very least, it should stay the same. "The new governor can't play Santa Claus with money and credit," warns William Robison, vice-president of the C.D. Howe Institute, who would raise rates by a quarter of a percentage point to ease demand and lower inflation.

In contrast, many economists think the U.S. slowdown is more than enough to cool off the economy—and that

rates should be lowered as a precaution. They believe the more important gauge is the so-called core inflation rate—that is, the rate minus the effect of energy and food prices, as well as indirect taxes. The core rate is only 1.8 per cent. And they warn that the bank had better move soon if it wants to fend off serious trouble. "There has been a tendency in the past to wait too long to start lowering interest rates when the economy starts to falter," says Ted Crammond, chief Canadian economist for J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.

And there's the rub. A former deputy finance minister, Dodge got the job despite the fact that Thiessen favored senior deputy

governor Malcolm Knight, a member of the governing council. As a result, some finance department officials harbor deep suspicions that the bank will be less than helpful to Dodge—if only because he is an insider. Meanwhile, many private forecasters already suspect that both Dodge and Martin are less concerned than the bank's governing board about meeting these crucial inflation targets. If the governing council lowers the bank rate unchanged on Jan. 23, it might look bad if Dodge promptly lowers it next month. "There will definitely be a cut within the next six weeks," predicts Dan Drummond, chief economist at the Toronto Dominion Bank. "True, it's hard to lower just now because the Canadian economic data is pretty strong. But it may not be the best thing if the very first thing that David Dodge does is to lower rates. It would be a nice gift if Gordon Thiessen actually did that farthest." Keep watching: in effect, monetary policy has become a high-stakes, high-brow soap opera.

Will Gordon help David?  
What will Paul think?  
Tune in next week.



Thiessen (left), Dodge and Martin: High-stakes drama

## Stockwell Day's settlement

Questions over a defamation suit continued to dog Canadian Alliance leader Stockwell Day. The court action was launched by Alberta lawyer Lorne Goddard in 1999 after Day, then the province's treasurer, criticized him in a newspaper letter to the editor for representing a pedophile facing child pornography charges. But although Day and Goddard reached a settlement in December, Day can tap into provincial funds that cover an MLA's legal fees, fines and costs, prompting demands that the amount be disclosed. Day agreed, and Goddard said he would also be willing to let the public know—but only if earlier attempts to settle the suit are also denied.

## New faces at the top

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien filled cabinet vacancies by adding three new faces to his team. Senator Sharon Carstairs entered cabinet as Senate leader, while rookie MP Robert Trillumpad of Nova Scotia became minister of state responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. Winnipeg MP Ray Padden was appointed secretary of state for Asia-Pacific, a junior portfolio.

## Back to university

Toronto's York University reached a settlement with its teaching and graduate students, ending a bitter strike that had cancelled classes for 11 weeks. The deal includes provision from tuition fees, one of the student's main demands. The fall semester, interrupted by the strike, will run until Feb. 28, classes for the spring term will end on May 11, while classes will run until May 26. Reading week was cancelled.

## Damages for sexual assault

In a rare settlement, the Correctional Service of Canada agreed to pay \$215,000 to a sexual-assault victim—only hours before her civil suit against the prison system was due to begin. The woman was attacked in 1988 by James Ambrose, a career criminal with more than 60 convictions. He was serving time for armed robbery and sexual assault with a weapon when he was grazed by gunfire and transferred to an Abbotsford, B.C., halfway house.

## Canada Notes



## An unhealthy situation in New Brunswick

Patients wait in the Saint John Regional Hospital emergency room during the New Brunswick doctors' strike over working conditions and wages. The 3,300 physicians ended their three-day walkout after they failed to reach a negotiated settlement with Premier Bernard Lord's Conservative government and the dispute was sent to binding, third-party arbitration.

## Bail denied for two Air India suspects

B.C. Associate Chief Justice Patrick Delaney bluntly rejected a bid for bail by two suspects in the bombing of a 1985 Air India flight and the murder of its 329 passengers, mostly Canadians. "The circumstances surrounding the murder are unpalatable," Delaney wrote in his 17-page ruling. As a result, Vancouver millionaire businessman Ropendran Singh Malik and Karanbhai, B.C. well-known April Singh Bhatti could remain in jail for two years before their cases even reach trial. The trial itself could last until spring 2003.

Defence lawyers say they need at least a year to review the 93 binders of prosecution materials they have already received, plus a further 170,000 documents containing as much as one million pages, to be disclosed later this month. As well, the ruling notes that a courtroom may have to be built or retrofitted to meet "special security considerations." There may be a further complicating factor: the RCMP's Air India task force says more arrests are expected. The legal teams for Malik and Bhatti will meet with their clients before deciding whether to appeal the bail ruling.

## McQuigge takes his stand on E. coli

The medical officer of health who blew the whistle on the E. coli outbreak in Wilfrid, Ont., last May testified at the judicial inquiry into the tainted-water disaster. Under tough cross-examination, Dr. Murray McQuigge, 55, contended he and his staff at the Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound Health Unit responded appropriately to the disaster, which killed seven. Critics have suggested he blamed the town's water manager, Stan Kowal, for the outbreak to deflect accusations against the health unit.

As George W. Bush waits impatiently in the wings, Bill Clinton bids a long and busy goodbye to the American presidency

# END OF AN ERA

By Andrew Phillips in Washington

The clock is ticking, louder and louder. There are just weeks to go, then mere days. So little time, so much to do before high noon on Saturday Jan. 20, when another will claim the title of Most Powerful Man in the World. So Bill Clinton has been very busy. He's put a third of national forest land off-limits to logging and road building. Reopened Washington's counterintelligence claims. Signed a controversial treaty creating an international war-crimes tribunal. Issued thousands of pages of new federal regulations affecting everything from emissions from diesel engines to standards for workplace health and safety. All that, plus taking a final crack at reviewing peace talks in the Middle East.

In the dying days of his presidency, as George W. Bush taps his foot impatiently outside the Oval Office, Clinton has seemed more relaxed than ever to let go. One night early in the new year, he joined a crowd of White House aides at a rock club in Washington and yelled, "I don't



sleep for the next 16 days, it will seem like four more years." And in one of several interviews marking his departure from power, Clinton unravelled that other presidents on the way out had expressed relief that they could finally escape the responsibilities and restraints of the White House. Not him. "I don't know what the heck they were talking about," he laughed.

After an extraordinary eight years in office, marked by remarkable accomplishments and even more remarkable humiliations, Clinton is about to leave on a high note. Voters usually fire off politicians after so long, but the American public gives him high marks—at least for how he has carried out his job. Fully 66 per cent, according to one recent survey, approve of his perfor-

he'll run for president his whole life," says his leading biographer, David Marans. Even now, his accomplishments are striking. He was power at a time when Republicans were in the ascendancy, and managed to move his Democratic party back to the centre of American political life. He embraced the global economy and presided over an unprecedented growth in U.S. influence around the world. He redefined the role of government—pioneering so-called third-way policies that allowed progressive parties to recapture power in an era suspicious of big government. Most important, he survived everything his opponents could throw at him—and lived to see them out his door.

To Clinton's more thoughtful critics, that was also his tragedy. A man of unquestioned brilliance, by common consensus the most gifted politician of his generation, he was also his own worst enemy. Americans knew full well that he was flawed when they first elected him in 1992, and scandal dogged his presidency from the outset. But nothing prepared them for the revelation in early 1998 of his sad and sordid affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. From that came his most undeniable sound bite—"I did not have sexual relations with that woman"—as well as his worst political defeat: his impeachment by the House of Representatives. As a result,



With wife Hillary and daughter Chelsea: baby boomer

mance on the job, higher even than Ronald Reagan after his two terms. But as always with Clinton, that is far from the whole story. Americans see him as a good leader—but not as a good man, and certainly not an honest one. They appreciate his successes, especially his role in the longest and strongest economic expansion in U.S. history. But they are painfully aware of his dark side, the weaknesses that repeatedly led him into temptation and made him the first elected president to be impeached.

At 54, he will be the second-youngest man to leave the presidency (Theodore Roosevelt was just 51 when he stepped down in 1909). He will, in all likelihood, have many more years of active life, and those who leave him say he will continue to argue for his place in history. "In a sense,

he leaves with more going for him than he might have accomplished if not for the self-inflicted wounds and his reluctance to take political risks. "There's a widespread sense of a wasted opportunity," says Thomas Mann, a presidential scholar at Washington's Brookings Institution.

Whatever else he achieved, Clinton takes most pride in his administration's economic record. In his final weeks, the White House has poured out reports of "fast streets" soaring, his accomplishments. Growth averaging four per cent since 1993; U.S. unemployment at its lowest level in 30 years—down from seven per cent in mid-1993 to an average of four per cent last year. An explosion in the stock market—the Dow Jones industrial average more than tripled in eight years. Most striking, a turnaround from a



With Hillary (right) last December, Bill Clinton in 1993 (left) with Lewinsky in 1998 (far left), self-inflicted wounds and a reluctance to take political risks



Paula Jones during her sexual harassment case against Clinton, with Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion and Israeli host July 1993; no peace deal

## After an extraordinary eight years in office, marked by remarkable accomplishments and humiliations, Clinton is leaving on a high note

federal deficit of \$433 billion in 1992 to a surplus of \$354 billion in 2000. And on and on—despite the recent slowdowns, the figures for the U.S. economy in the 1990s are undeniably remarkable. The question, however, will remain with for years: how much credit does Clinton deserve?

To his critics, including Republicans eagerly awaiting a Bush re-election in Washington, the answer has always been: not much. Although Clinton campaigned in 1992 as the United States was mired in recession, the U.S. economy had already begun to grow again in 1991. President George Bush had reached a deal with Congress the previous year to cut the deficit sharply, allowing Clinton to inherit almost ideal conditions and benefit from a recovery that was just gathering steam.

Yet his credit, though, he continued to cut the deficit. Even before he took office in January 1993, he reversed his priorities. Instead of pushing the traditional Democratic spending programs he had campaigned on, he pressed for a deficit-cutting package and won approval for it against fierce Republican opposition. The plan persuaded Alan Greenspan's Federal Reserve Board to cut interest rates sharply, providing the needed stimulus for the boom of the '90s. Just as important, Clinton split with his own party by strongly supporting efforts to expand global trade (such as signing the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico in 1993). And his administration intervened skill-

fully when foreign instability threatened U.S. growth, such as the Mexican peso crisis in 1995 and the Asian financial meltdown of 1997-1998. These independent economists who routinely reviled his record put it this way: "In terms of economic policy, Bill Clinton has been both good and lucky."

There was, however, an inescapable irony. The first baby boomer president, coming into office with the liberal instincts of his generation, ended up as a champion of traditional, conservative, deficit-cutting economic policies—even acknowledging at one point that he had in some ways turned into an "Old-school Republican." His insight—shared by other liberal-leaning politicians from Britain to Canada—was to understand that governments first had to be tamed before they could be revolutionized. His former chief speechwriter, Michael Waldman, recalls a night in early 1996 when Clinton told him: "Our mission has been to save government from its own excesses so that it can again be a progressive force."

The strong U.S. economy made a success out of his most controversial domestic program, agreeing to a massive overhaul of welfare programs that cut benefits and forced millions of recipients into the workforce. It provoked outrage among traditional liberals, but provoked Clinton against attacks from the newly emboldened Republicans, who captured control of Congress in 1994 due largely to the confusion and failure of his first two years in office—including the collapse of a Hillary Clinton attempt at massive

reform of health care. The boom was also the backdrop for many social improvements. Crime rates dropped sharply, as did such dumps as teen pregnancy, divorce, abortion and drug use. The United States became not only safer on Clinton's watch, but by many measures it also became better—even more moral, despite his personal failings.

Clinton was also the first post-Cold War president, presiding over an era when the United States had almost unprecedented global power. There, his touch was less sure. Despite his focus on the economy, he had early success when he brought Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat together at the White House in 1993 to sign a peace accord and stage a dramatic handshake. But by the end, his efforts to broker a lasting peace in the Middle East had unravelled.

And, foreign policy experts generally agree, Clinton failed to spell out clear standards for when the United States should use its unprecedented clout around the world. His record includes failures like the aborted 1993 foray into Somalia, where 15 U.S. soldiers were killed, as well as successes like the 75-day NATO air war over Kosovo in 1999, which forced Serbia to withdraw, and his efforts to bring peace to Northern Ireland. But it also includes some episodes like Bosnia, where Washington stood aside while the killing continued, before finally acting with its NATO allies to stop the fighting.

For many, though, one word will forever define Bill Clinton: scandal. From the start, the sprawling series of alleged wrongdoings that went under the name "Whitewater" dogged his administration. But it was the Lewinsky episode that exploded so spectacularly in January 1998, that indelibly stained his legacy. Seven months later, he had to admit the worst—that he had indeed conducted a secret affair with a young woman who had steps from the Oval Office, and then lied about it. He was impeached, but finally acquitted in the Senate. Once again, he survived, but the cost was both personal humiliation and the loss of a year of his presidency.

Any other leader might have been broken by the sheer shame

of it all, documented in thousands of pages of testimony collected by the investigators who meticulously cataloged every "coincidence" between the President and the intern. But Clinton turned the tables on his enemies. He fought back admirably, and his own party, appalled more by the ideological excess of his opponents than by the biological excess of their leader, stuck by him. The American public, offended more by the relentless pursuit of scandal than by scandal itself, punished his persecutors at the polls. It wasn't that he fooled them. Rather, commentator David Halberstam wrote recently, they understood that only a man of extraordinary appetites could win the presidency against such odds, and "they shrewdly sensed that sexual excess was often the flip side of such ego."

By the end, it was Republicans like the senior Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and Clinton's chief nemesis, prosecutor Ken Starr, who were consigned to political oblivion. Mainstream calls for "political justice" to his sinning nature for using his immense" strengths against them." As he wrote, it may be less complicated than that. Clinton, it turned out, simply understood the American people better than his opponents did—and had an uncanny ability to use both his own wits and his master reading of the polls to sense their shifting moods.

As he nears out, he will not be going far when he finally closes the door of the Oval Office for the last time. With his wife newly ensconced in the U.S. Senate, he will split his time between New York City, Little Rock, Ark. (where his presidential library will be built) and Washington (where the Clintons paid \$4.25 million for a handsome brick house). Job offers have been pouring into his office, and apologetic humans are vying to sign him for personal appearances that could command as much as \$150,000. And he has arranged for his friend and chief fund-raiser, Terrence McMillin, to take over as head of the Democratic National Committee, giving him a direct line into his party's leadership. Judging by the festive pace of his final weeks, Clinton is still resilient, energetic and ambitious. His final statement is still to be written. ■



He denied I did not have sexual relations

## Fading hopes for peace

**As a third night** of talks between Israeli and Palestinian negotiators ended without a breakthrough, U.S. President Bill Clinton conceded that a peace deal would not likely be reached before he leaves office on Jan. 20. "Whatever happens," said Clinton, "will be the responsibility of the next administration and the winner of the Israeli election." Under his proposed Mideast plan, Palestinians have to agree to give up Jerusalem's Temple Mount, a site holy to both Muslims and Jews. As well, the Palestinian state would occupy 95 percent of the West Bank and all of the Gaza. In return, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat would give up his demand that nearly four million Palestinian exiles have the right to return to Israel. But neither president-elect George W. Bush nor the next Israeli government are bound by Clinton's proposals.



Palestinian policemen, Israeli soldiers: no deal

Despite months of setbacks, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak remains committed to Clinton's plan. But Arafat has grown more skeptical about whether Barak can deliver on any agreement. Polls show Barak nearly 20 percentage points behind his rival, Left Party Leader Ariel Sharon, in the Feb. 6 contest for prime minister. Sharon has made a clear bid, he wins, any Israeli-Palestinian deal reached at or since the failed Camp David talks last July will be null and void—raising the possibility of more violence in a region where at least 350 people, mostly Palestinians, have been killed in the past 15 weeks.

## Swift exit for a Bush cabinet nominee

**President-elect George W. Bush** nominated Elaine Chao, a former head of the Peace Corps, for labor secretary. She replaced his initial choice, Leslie Chaires, a Washington-based columnist who withdrew her name a week after being nominated when it was revealed that she had sheltered an illegal Guatemalan immigrant in her home for two years in the early 1990s and given her at least \$2,250 in spending money. Chaires' withdrawal caused questions about the speed with which the Bush administration is making selections through the vetting process—and whether more surprises lie ahead.

## Playsic surrenders

**Bijana Plavcic**, the 70-year-old former president of the Serbian part of Bosnia, Republika Srpska, pleaded not guilty to nine charges, including genocide and other war crimes, after voluntarily surrendering to the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Plavcic,

a former biology professor and military leader, is accused of masterminding the deaths of thousands of civilians, mostly Muslims, in 1991 and 1992 during a campaign to create a greater Serbian homeland. She is the first woman and the highest-ranking politician to stand trial for alleged crimes committed during 3½ years of ethnic warfare after the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991.

**Anonymous for a child's killers**  
A British judge granted Jon Venables and Robert Thompson, the convicted killers of two-year-old James Bulger, anonymity when they are released from prison later this year. The decision bars the media from disclosing any information about their new identities. Venables and Thompson, both 18, were 10 when they abducted Bulger from a Liverpool shopping mall in 1993 before beating him to death.

## Nigerian teen to be flogged

**Banya Ibrahim Magana**, the Nigerian teenager sentenced to 180 lashes for fornication, was recently married in an attempt to prevent punishment. But a judge said his marital status was immaterial and she would be punished as planned on Jan. 27. Magana, who gave birth to a baby girl two weeks ago, said she was impregnated by one of her father's three friends with whom she was forced to have sex.

## Scandal in Ukraine

Released audio tapes suggest that Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma ordered his security guard to get rid of investigative journalist Georgiy Gongadze. Gongadze, 31, a critic of Kuchma's government, was reported missing on Sept. 16. Officials believe a degraded corpse found in a forest near Kiev is his.

## Admission of atrocity

After a 15-month review, the United States admitted its soldiers shot and killed unarmed Korean civilians 160 km southeast of Seoul near the village of Nu Gun Ri in the early days of the Korean War. Officials said the tragedy was the result of confusion among the soldiers and was not a deliberately committed atrocity.

## Gazing into the past

Scientists announced they believe a crystal found in Australia in 1984 is at least 4.5 billion years old. That would make it the oldest piece of Earth discovered so far—and indicate that life on the planet may have developed much earlier than previously thought. The grain of silicon is no wider than a human hair.

## Tech Explorer

# Apple's core strategy

**A**t times, it seemed Steve Jobs could do no wrong. After he returned to Apple Computer Inc. in 1997, Jobs launched new life into the company he co-founded, launching the colorful iMac the next year. He appeared to do it again last July, unveiling the elegant Power Mac G4 Cube computer. Unfortunately, the Cube has not sold well, and Apple investors in general remain high despite deep discounting. So when Jobs took the stage last week at the Macworld conference in San Francisco, his audience hoped for another techno-miracle. After all, while Apple controls only 3.4 percent of the global PC market, its innovations often set standards for the industry as a whole.

This time, though, there was a sense of Apple playing catch-up. Jobs even admitted it while presenting iTunes, free software to download and write music CDs or transfer songs to digital MP3 players. "We're late to this party," said Jobs of the digital-music market, "and we're about to do a leapfrog." He envisioned the personal computer as the home's "digital hub," connecting camcorders, sensors and Internet appliances. He unveiled four new PowerMac models to fill that role, with processing speeds of up to 733 megahertz. All can

burn CDs, and one has a recordable DVD drive for audio and video. New software helps people make money.

Jobs said the long wait for Apple's OS X operating system will soon be over, with sales beginning on March 24. He also previewed powerful new PowerBook G4 laptops. None too soon, this week Apple is expected to announce its first quarterly loss in three years.

## The X-Man

**The market** for electronic games is estimated at \$30 billion a year, and Bill Gates wants a large part of it. The chairman of Microsoft is crossing the XBox as the software giant's planned rival to Sony's wildly popular PlayStation 2



Jobs with a G4 laptop, playing catch-up

game console. But until Gates appeared at an electronics show this month, few people knew what the XBox, due this fall, looks like. Gates showed off some crazy graphics in an Internet-connected prototype that analysts said looked formidable. He followed up last week by announcing that toy maker Lego will develop games for the console. In shipping that, however, it still is doubtful.

Doreen Harshe-Hicks

## TSE, Dow Jones, Nasdaq, and other rollercoasters.

## Cool site

## Tech support

Computer bugging you? Anyone stumped by hard ware, software or strange errors can consult Indiana University's Knowledge Base at [kb.indiana.edu](http://kb.indiana.edu). Users can search the site for tips and explanations, or use the menu for help with Microsoft operating systems or Macintosh basics. An exhaustive glossary answers questions as simple as "What is Adobe Acrobat?" but also offers help for more advanced users.

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# Trouble at the Megaplex

The passion for big, big theatres threatens to sink the Cineplex Odeon chain

By Robert Sheppard

They are Canada's dubious gift to the cinematic world—the opulent, multi-screen “megaplexes” that have become the new cathedrals of the silver screen. Popular? No question. Megaplexes drive in droves right by their local theatres to luxuriate in the dazzle of the megaplex experience: instant seating (some offer lounge) and widespread screens; cels and video slides in the lobbies; personal screens in certain theatres; hot food and popcorn that runs \$6 a bag (concession markups can average 64 per cent in the larger chains).

But it's not just movie lovers who have succumbed to megaplex mania. Supposedly hardheaded business executives—the braintrusts among them, the money behind Canada's ailing Cineplex Odeon chain—have fallen victim to their allure, to the point where the theatre business in North America now resembles the coal industry in Newfoundland: too many enterprises chasing too few patrons. “The industry is way out of control,” says Christopher Dixon, an analyst with UBS Warburg in New York City, who says that one in five theatres should be closed. The megaplex building boom has created some 37,000 screens in North America to service roughly the same number of people who went to the movies 50 years ago. And, for some, the money is so rich you could smear it on popcorn.

Take Garth Drabinsky, popcorn lover. A Barbapants impression of the old school, Drabinsky was the one who cobbled together the Cineplex Odeon chain in the early 1980s—before being unconsciously ousted in a bitter coup in 1989. His 18-theatres showplace, carved out of the parking arcade in Toronto just opened Ocean Centre in 1979, was the first of the so-called multiplexes—smallish arenas across under the same



roof designed to show nearly new features. His counterpart 18-screen, 6,000-seat colossus on the Universal Studios lot in Los Angeles in 1987 was—at a cost of \$1 million (U.S.) a screen—the prototype of the megaplex that took flight during the American and Asian boom of the mid-1990s.

“But I knew where to build theatres and what to spend on them,” exclaims Drabinsky, from a car phone somewhere in the wilds of Toronto. The cinema on the Universal lot was sold for nearly three times its cost a few years later, Drabinsky recalls. “What’s going on right now?”—giddy, multi-screen megaplexes being built just a few kilometers from each other, driving cinema operators into bankruptcy at a huge clip—“is just crazy,” he says. And what is really crazy: the corporate meltdown at taking place in the midst of the largest box-office boom in Hollywood history.

According to the Motion Picture Association of America, the motion-picture industry clocked 2000 with a record \$11.4 billion in North American ticket sales, its largest annual—nine years—of continuous gains. But Time Warner's good news has not trickled down to exhibitors. Six chains in the United States have filed for bankruptcy protection and now one of the largest—New York-based Loews Cineplex Entertainment Corp., the parent since 1998 of Canada's Cineplex Odeon Corp.—is reeling on the bank, blaming a season of poor summer fare.

With nearly \$2.3 billion in liabilities on its books as of Aug. 31, Loews has gone through five debt-scheduling agreements with its major creditors since the summer and now its credit rating reduced to junk-bond status by Moody's Investor Service in December. It now has until Jan. 26 to come up with a plan to satisfy its creditors and major shareholders—giant Sony Corp. and Viacom Inc.

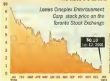
Loews Cineplex Odeon is one of three big chains, all U.S.-owned, operating in Canada. Market leader Famous Players Inc. with 110 theatres boasting 994 screens is still profitable. (“Some people in this business have pneumonia, we have a cold,” says president Rabbi Chase.) Nonetheless, revenues have dipped. The newest arrival, Kansas City, Mo.-based AMC Entertainment Inc., has not shown a profit in two years. But it is convinced to serve new megaplexes—four in suburban Toronto, one in Ottawa and another two almost completed in Montreal and Mississauga, Ont.—will more than pay for themselves in the long run, says vice-pres-



## THE BIG PICTURE

COMPANY	No. of screens	
	CANADA	UNITED STATES
Famous Players	110	8*
Loews Cineplex	851	1,950
AMC Entertainment	122	2,486

\*Percent company National Amusements Inc. has 1,106 U.S. screens



million in red ink at the parent. More seriously, overall revenues in the Canadian operation dropped 20 per cent from the previous year.

A month ago, Cineplex Odeon chairman Allen Karp acknowledged “the industry is wretched.” But though an associate he told *Maclean's* that the timing is too sensitive at the moment to discuss the situation. Rumours abound: Will takeover specialist Grey Schwartz make a bid? (He owns a small chain already.) Will Cineplex Odeon be pushed into insolvency? (Loews' latest filing with U.S. regulatory officials says that if the Canadian operation goes under that will not affect the parent's credit agreements.) The only certainty: neither Famous Players nor AMC is looking to take over its rival. “We’ve had some ‘what if’ conversations,” says AMC's King. “But nothing you would call actual negotiations.”

The more likely solution, says UBS Warburg's Dixon, is that the venerable Loews, built by an immigrant who created a chain of nickelodeons in 1904, will try to restructure itself by a shareholder infusion or by converting its lenders to swap debt for ownership, and so on. This is, after all, a business built on celluloid and dreams, and the mighty megaplex is no exception. When AMC quoted this latest round of megaplexing in 1999 with its 24-screen complex in Dallas, other investors looked on and saw that, with the economies of scale, operators could turn a profit with little more than 20-per-cent occupancy. Whoo. Sagarmalas. What they didn't fully appreciate was that everyone and her brother would build one on the very next corner. ■





Projectionist  
Lee at the Panasonic  
digital is coming

## Focus, please!

By Brian D. Johnson

At the megaplex, everything suggests you are in for a high-tech treat. The lobby looks like a theme park designed by rocket scientists, a retro vision of the future with flying saucers, curves and jet-set colours. Plopping through the disparate lounge of coca stands and video arcades, you go looking for *Get Away*, so if walking to a gate at the airport. Then, grateful for the comfy areas seating and the reassuring use of the screen, you settle in for the onslaught of commercials and trailers, until finally... *Big Screen!* Big Screen? You are about to see Tom Hanks on a tropical island projected by state-of-the-art technology.

Well, maybe not. It's possible that the focus will be fuzzy, the picture won't be bright enough and the sound will be either too loud or too soft. For all the booming hype, and higher prices, projection at the megaplex is often less than ideal. Putting giant screens in small rooms magnifies focus problems. Projector bulbs are left to grow dim long beyond their rated lifespans. And if something goes wrong—with just one projector screen overrunning as many as 20 automated projectors—chances are no one will notice.

"Despite the big picture and big sound,

you're not getting industry standards," says Hans Burgschmidt, technical director of the Toronto International Film Festival. "Big screens require big lamps, and the heat affects the lens and the film. It's also not unheard-of to leave bulbs in for over 5,000 hours even if they're only rated for 1,000." Projection is in a sorry state at both the old and new theatres, adds Burgschmidt. When the Toronto festival takes over Cineplex

**Movies often look worse at a megaplex, thanks to technology stretched to the limit**

and Famous Players screens for 10 days every September, he has to overhaul the facilities to make them acceptable.

Megaplexes, of course, flock to the new megaplexes. "With the same seating, it's like dying fire-dance instead of ecstasy. And kids love the carnival atmosphere. But the new theatres are stretching an old technology to the limit, a technology that basically hasn't changed in a hundred years. Cinema was the last great inspiration of the Industrial Revolution, a medium literally forged from a fire in a machine. Before the introduc-

tion of xenon bulbs in the 1970s, a projector would tend a carbon-arc lamp that blazed with an open flame. Now, in the digital age, the world's dominant arc form still relies on a variation of this industrial scheme—a river of molten metal rising through a hot light. And even as digital techniques take over movie production, the final product is still geared to speakers, like a car latched to a horse.

Digital video projection, though, is booming. Famous Players now has two digital projectors act up in its Toronto and Vancouver theatres. But with the machines costing \$200,000 apiece, the technology will likely overtake, and the distributors and exhibitors are arguing over who should pay for it. Moreover, preventing piracy will be a nightmare, whether movies are downloaded by satellite, fibre-optic cable or disc.

Despite the obstacles, Barry Blackburn, national director of technical services at Famous Players, feels that film will go the way of vinyl. "We've reached an impasse," he says, "and it's probably time to change mediums. I'm firmly convinced that we'll switch from film to video. But because of the financial collapse of the major exhibition chains around here, we're looking at a good five years before it happens."

Meanwhile, Blackburn is candid about projection woes at the new megaplexes. If you put a huge screen in a relatively small theatre, he explains, the projector needs a brighter bulb and a lens with a much shorter focal length, which leaves very little margin for error. "Plus the heat of the lamps keeps popping the film out of focus," he says. "A lot of the problems are in the print, which are done on high-speed duplicators. Once you start magnifying, the problems are magnified. When we went to this very big screen, I was hesitant. We didn't have the tools. But I'm now pleased with the results."

Big sound is another issue. "What really screws it up are the trailers," says Blackburn, "which are substantially louder than the feature. With the wider

dynamic range offered by digital sound, the trailers get even louder. The issue is on us to turn them down." Sometimes no one turns them down back up for the movie. With automation, adds Blackburn, "we no longer have highly trained projectionists—people who know what to look for."

A visit to the projection facility at the Pantheon, Famous Players' gritty-race-flagship in downtown Toronto, is like going behind the curtain to look for the Wizard of Oz and finding nobody home. The "booth" is a series of corridors containing a curious mix of technology. At one window, a slide projector clicks through a "pre-show" of movie trivia. At another, a projector automatically scans showing. *Conquering Tiger*, *Hidden Dragon* at a time set by computer. Celluloid spins into the lens from a giant platter. On the wall is a series of tie-up pulleys, used to arrange film in a clockwise from one projector to another, so two or more theatres can show the same movie at once.

Nearly a digital projector, a high-bulb box, its side. Powered by 18 200-watt halogen bulbs, it contains three polarized slant chaps, each coated with 1.1 million tiny motorized mirrors that flash a black-and-white digital code, which is translated into a colour image beamed by a 6,000-watt bulb. Video projection is close to achieving the resolution of 35-mm film. But some critics, such as Roger Ebert, are lighting the trend. Hoping the industry will embrace innovations such as *Magnavision*, a new system for showing 35-mm with much greater clarity.

For fans of celluloid, digital cinema seems remote. Film connoisseurs, to grant Blackburn, are part of the media's future, in print. The screen is actually black for half the time as the shutter opens and closes, the rapid eye movement of a waking dream. Video is more steady—smoother and seamless. No doubt we'll get used to it. And because it's digital, the original image will never get scratched, worn or faded. Everyone will use the same movie. But without the weave and jitter of celluloid dancing through the lens, will it still be a moving picture? **B**

## DR. VANSTONE'S RESEARCH PROVES THAT SOMETIMES THE ROUNDABOUT WAY IS BETTER THAN THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW.

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## Radical idea: sell the truth

**By his own admission,** Mike Palmer has always been a bit of a maverick among the Bay Street crowd. Over the course of his 30-year career in the investment business, the 52-year-old with the combative manner has been a financial analyst and managed the research department at four boutique brokerage firms. But he says that he never felt comfortable with the cozy relationship between analysts and their corporate-finance colleagues. And the recent extended bull market has only made matters worse. "The bull market has turned most analysts into salespeople," he says. "Investors get less faith about research quality when stocks are steadily rising. And so analysts are a lot more focused on generating rich underwriting fees than doing real research."

According to Palmer, all brokerage firm commissions are now suspended, which means that securities dealers typically earn about three cents per share in commission for a block trade with an institution, compared with five cents of about \$1 a share in an underwriting deal. "You can't really fault them," he concedes. "It's just a natural reaction to market forces on their part."

Still, Palmer is no longer content just to grumble about the escalating conflict he perceives between glowing corporate research reports and the fire generated by equity suits. As of last fall, he has put his money where his mouth is, starting a firm called Veritas Investment Research Corp. with a partner, high-profile former accountant and scientist Al Rosen. The company's mission is to provide pure research to institutional clients. As a result, Veritas offers no equity underwriting, makes no investment recommendation and sets no performance targets for the 36 stocks it currently covers.

Another thing that sets it apart from others is its approach to analysis. Instead of employing a battery of chorused financial analysis, the degradation most commonly held by those who publish investment research, Veritas relies on Rosen's expertise as a finance accountant to give studies a sharper edge. "Over the years, Al's seen all the dirty tricks companies try to put over," says Palmer. "He knows what all the wiggles are." In fact, of the worst-performing stocks over the past year, Veritas published negative reports on five of them—including Nortel Networks Corp.—well before their implosion.

Palmer is convinced that more dramatic moves in North American equity markets will make it easier for Veritas to gain ground in an intensely competitive and cluttered sector. He argues that investors have been too willing to go long to accept valuations based on increasingly insincere accounting practices, such as the focus on EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) rather than cash flow, and the creative interpretation of Canadian GAAP

(generally accepted accounting practices). Palmer also notes that the supposedly independent relationship between companies and their auditors is often open to question, because auditors are paid by the company and come under tremendous pressure to accede to management's view on any point of contention.

In fact, Rosen is a long-standing and vocal critic of Canadian accounting standards and practices overall. He makes the case that GAAP leads to flawed financial reporting by focusing on income rather than cash, obscuring potential liquidity problems. Rosen also insists that current GAAP allows troubled companies to hide their problems in repeated ways, including elimination of segregated balance sheets, which separate current from non-current liabilities. He also points out that few American investors grasp the differences between their standards and the more liberal ones in Canada. And that can lead to nasty surprises when stocks are listed for trade on U.S. exchanges, but still adhere to Canadian GAAP.

The emergence of technology stocks has exacerbated those weaknesses—and further blurred the line between sales and analysis, according to Palmer. He says that when such companies began, many tech-related companies, along with their business and business models, were so new to investors that they bought shares before they fully understood what they were buying and how it should be valued. At the same time, most investors were so anxious to capitalize on the boom that they allowed all sorts of unproven "analysts" to produce research and follow orders.

Although Veritas has officially been in business only since October, Palmer and his partners are openly concerned about whether they can maintain their mission and stay on sustainable profit. While they claim their fees bring a measure to their published research among professional money managers who are fed up with biased research reports, Veritas is essentially working on a speculative basis at this point. It is sending out its product in the hope that it will be of sufficient interest—and use—that clients will begin to pay for it. They can do this in cash or, using a more discrete practice, by channeling orders through another Bay Street firm, Commission Direct. By building up free credits this way with Commission Direct, a service that allows dealers to outsource the middle-office function, Veritas can execute trades based on its own work without incurring the steep cost of its own trading floor, and still collect a commission from its clients.

But in the end, investors pay for performance. And there's no guarantee that even the companies with impeccable accounting practices and ethics will ever be fully appreciated by the market. Rather, like Palmer and Rosen themselves,

### Alcan head resigns

Alcan Aluminium Ltd. lost a respected CEO when Jacques Bougie, a lawyer and 20-year employee, resigned. Although Bougie, 53, cited personal reasons, there was speculation that a failed three-way merger with a French and a Swiss company in 1999 contributed to his decision. Montreal-based Alcan instead made a deal only with the Swiss company, Aluminium Group Ltd. Alcan said it will conduct a search and appoint a successor within six months.

### Indigo wins a round

The battle for mega-bookstore chain Chapters Inc. escalated as takeover specialist Gerry Schwartz and his wife, Heather Rosman, owner of real Indigo Books & Music Inc., won the right to proceed with a better offer without having to open Indigo's books. Tinkling Retail Enterprises Ltd. controlled by the couple, agreed to bid for Chapters assets—trading at 39 before the battle began—to \$15 from \$13.

### Playday at the bank

Royal Bank of Canada chairman John Coughen was paid well last year, but not as well as one of the people reporting to him. Coughen got \$4.2 million, including a cash bonus of \$1.5 million. But the CEO of RBC Dominion Securities, Gordon Nixon, earned more than \$11 million in salary, bonuses and stock options.

### Repairing the sky

American Airlines and United Airlines outlined a bold plan to revamp the U.S. industry. Bankrupt TWA World Airlines said it would sell most of its assets to American's parent, AMR Corp. American also said it would buy some of U.S. Airways' assets to smooth United's acquisition of the carrier with regulations, and would get a large stake in DC Air, a new regional airline. The plan faces intense regulatory scrutiny.

### A new media giant

Shares of AOL Time Warner Inc. began trading after the giant Internet provider and the media and entertainment conglomerate finished their \$160-billion deal. It took the two companies a year to give approvals.



## A new Jeep rises as Chrysler faces downhill

Amid more warnings of reduced profits, DaimlerChrysler Corp. unveiled its new sport utility vehicle. The Jeep Liberty is Chrysler's answer to the successful BMWs produced by rivals the Honda and Toyota. The company, which has scrapped the classic Jeep Cherokee, says it expects to produce a total of 2.6 million vehicles this year, down 10 per cent from last year.

## Cutting back at Nortel

Canada's largest high-tech business and the single most influential company on the Toronto Stock Exchange gave layoffs notices to 750 of its Ontario employees and a further 200 at its Toronto-area offices. Brampton, Ont.-based Nortel Networks Corp. later confirmed it expects to eliminate about 4,000 permanent full-time positions from its global workforce of about 95,000. But it said it also wants to hire at least that many people in areas where it plans to concentrate in the future, especially in Internet and fibre-optic networks business. The company said the layoffs are unconnected to fears that a global recession is imminent.

## Financial Outlook

It was another record year for Canadian mergers and acquisitions. At \$294 billion, the total volume in 2000 was nearly one-third higher than the previous year. Another record was the sheer number of mega-deals (worth at least \$1 billion). Though accounting for only three per cent of all transactions, the 39 mega-deals contributed 34 per cent of the total dollar volume. Cross-border M&A's were also up in 2000. The deal of the year was the \$43.5-billion buyout of Seagram Co. Ltd. by the French firm Vivendi SA,

announced last June. And Canadian companies were certainly buying Americans. The Canucks grabbed up 248 U.S. companies with a value of \$47.6 billion—more than double what the Yanks brought up north.

WHO BOUGHT WHOM			
Top 100 transactions of foreign interest companies			
	Value	U.S.	Non-U.S.
All companies	\$96.6	41.2	55.4
U.S. companies	17.0	15.0	2.0
Foreign subsidiaries of Canadian interest companies	30.0	27.0	3.0
By all buyers	123.8	68.2	55.6
By U.S. buyers	28.4	26.4	2.0



The growing trade in animals, some of them rare species, poses dangers to public health and safety—and to the animals themselves

# Animal Wrongs

By Susan McClelland

At first, all that can be seen of Subira, a 2 3/4-year-old lioness, are her amber eyes and a tuft of golden hair. Peering out from behind a shed at Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, 300 km north of Toronto, the big cat sounds completely still, her head tilted and her gaze set on two people walking towards her pen. When the couple gets about 10 m away, Subira springs forward, closing the gap in huge bounds. Stopped by the wall of her cage, she paces back and forth, curiously staring up at the newcomers. When the men ignore her keeps, she turns knees-like, languidly rubbing her back and side against the cage's steel anvil.

Such a cute tragedy. Such a sordid story Subira means "endurance" in Swahili, and the big cat has needed that quality in her initially miserable life. She was dumped into the exotic pet trade as a month-old cub—likely, authorities say, from an overstocked zoo. She was purchased as an animal in Alberta by a 17-year-old Vancouver

guy, who soon realized she could not care for the growing lion and just locked it in a garage. She eventually sold Subira to two Toronto, B.C., men, but they, too, found lion ownership tiring. They couldn't find another buyer, however, and coincidently having the lion put down before Aspen Valley agreed to take the cat in.

When Subira arrived at the sanctuary, she was severely malnourished—at nine months of age, she weighed only 25 lb, the average size of a two-month-old cub. As well, the push on her feet were raw, her nose was badly scratched and blood oozed from two large wounds on her forehead. She was in such a pathetic state that sanctuary founder



Subira as an abused cub; and now (left) she begins life as a pet, an experience that nearly killed her

## 'When they hear about abuse of captive wildlife, Canadians are outraged. They don't realize how much of this we actually see.'

Audrey Tournay felt compelled to take care of the lion even though his facility usually only exhibits animals native to Ontario. "I have seen many tragedies because of the wildlife trade," Tournay told *Maclean's*. "but I never get used to it."

A lion as a pet is mighty sound outrageous, but there are few sanctuaries on ownership of wildlife, so the trade flourishes legally through classified advertisements in newspapers or trade magazines, at auctions and on the Internet. The majority of those exotic animals are imported birds and lizards that are sold by local shops to good homes. But more rare—and dangerous—imports are storming into Canada, so the fella next door might suddenly acquire a wild cat, or a venomous snake or a rare monkey. That doesn't necessarily pose a problem if the animals are housed in enclosures that protect public safety, and if their owners are capable of caring for them. But too often, the animals suffer at the hands of ignorant or abusive owners. Luckily ones such as Sabine are rescued and rehabilitated, but others end up dying precariously from being in deplorable conditions, being killed for their body parts or sold in shocking markets.

In Canada, there is little to stop this from continuing. The maximum sentence for cruelty to animals under the Criminal Code is a month in jail and a \$2,000 fine. Some species are protected in certain provinces—Quebec has an Act Respecting the Conservation and Development of Wildlife, which, among other things, regulates animals in captivity. But there are no national endangered-species or animal-welfare laws.

In fact, when the federal Liberals suspended Parliament prior to last fall's election, the species-at-risk act, which would have effected some protection to wild animals on the Canadian Endangered Species List, died before going final approval. The suspension also killed proposed Criminal Code amendments that would have imposed longer sentences and heavier fines for animal abuse. "The public thinks there is more protection out there for animals than there is," says Shelly MacDonnell, program director for the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies in Ottawa.

There is more than just a shortfall of legislation. Traditional animal-welfare organizations such as local humane societies are generally geared to caring for domestic animals like cats and dogs. And the few wildlife sanctuaries, such as the one north of Toronto, are strained beyond capacity. "When they hear about abuse of captive wildlife, Canadians are outraged," MacDonnell says. "What they don't realize is how much of this we actually see."

The trade of wildlife is a huge industry. No single agency keeps global statistics, but experts calculate that the legal side of the business is annually worth \$15 billion worldwide, and millions in Canada. Law-enforcement agencies conservatively estimate the worldwide value of the black trade in wild animals at more than \$10 billion a year. That makes the black market for things such as rare species and animal body parts worth more annually than the illegal traffic



Exotic pets at an Ontario wildlife sanctuary as well as many wild pets, but owners could not properly care for it

control traffic in threatened species through a permit system. But while CITES has made it more difficult to legally trade certain animals, the industry has still grown exponentially. In Canada, 7,400 live animals were imported or exported in 1993 with CITES permits. By 1997, the most recent year for which Canadian import-export statistics are available, more than 25,000 CITES permits were issued.

Even conventional pets can be hazards. Dogs on fire, cats on wheels, and exotic species pose a far more serious threat to public health, particularly since there are no federal licensing standards for pet-shop operators. Salmonella bacteria, including strains resistant to antibiotics, have been found on pets such as snakes, turtles, iguanas and lizards. And some primates, which are increasingly popular as pets, are suspected by scientists of carrying a number of deadly viruses. In 1999, a 22-year-old lab assistant at Alberta's University of Alberta died from herpes B after coming into contact with bodily fluid from a rhesus monkey. And there are fears that some primates even carry HIV and the Ebola virus. "HIV appears to have come from chimpanzees," says Daniel Cook, lab manager at the B.C. Centre for Disease Control in Vancouver. "The virus with herpes viruses that don't cause problems for the monkeys but can be fatal to humans." Cook added ominously: "There are all kinds of health risks in the wildlife trade. We just don't know what they all are yet."

There are other sickly tales. In 1994, a 16-year-old boy in Houston, Ont., died of a broken neck after being bitten by one of his uncle's two Siberian tigers. In 1999, a 71-year-old woman in Clearview, N.B., required 400 stitches to close gashes on and around her head after she was attacked by her neighbor's Eurasian lynx. The victim had suggested by the house to drop off a birthday present. And last spring, a venomous saw-scaled viper—considered one of the most deadly snakes on earth—caused the evacuation of a city block in Toronto when it bit a child first and then in a woman. A single bite from a saw-scaled viper can be fatal, and in that time the device facility knows to have a veterinarian in the United States. The snake was eventually found behind a backboard. Despite a Toronto bylaw banning the ownership of venomous snakes, the saw-scaled viper was one of 13 reptiles and a mammal that Kent Pearson kept in his apartment. Many of the snakes have since been put down by the local health authority, and Pearson was fined \$14,000.

The proliferation of such pets has forced some governments to act. Since 1976, the Dangerous Wild Animals Act has required pet owners in Great Britain to house their lions, tigers and panthers in secure enclosures, and to have their animals inspected regularly by both the public and the animals' inspectors. Yet in Canada, such regulations are rare. Fewer than a quarter of all exotic-pet owners have an exotic-animal bylaw, and even one that does, King Township north of Toronto, is currently having to sue legislation to force a local motorcycle gang to give up its pet lion. Still, Maple Ridge, about 45 km east of Vancouver, is at least attempting to implement a bylaw that would ban the own-

in arms (page 40) is exacerbated by the traffic in illegal drugs.

The pet trade has long been linked to narcotic smuggling. A U.S. fish and wildlife service report claimed that more than one-third of all cocaine seized in 1993 was connected to pet importation. That year, officials at Miami International Airport found several hundred lion cubs from Colombia stuffed with 35 kg of cocaine. Most of the snakes were dead on arrival. Bear Bagley, an international relations professor and drug-trade expert at the University of Miami, says narcotic smugglers frequently turned out in the legal business of exporting animals. "Since the 1960s, Colombian drug lords have been involved in trafficking wildlife," says Bagley. "They would get known by customs, so no one was suspicious later when cocaine got smuggled with the animals."

Usually, though, the pets themselves are the commodity, and because the United States is the biggest market, dealers often route their Wild cargo through Canada. Last year, Michael and Harold Pilbrow of Toronto, Ont., were convicted of smuggling as many as 12,000 tropical and rare fish from Africa into Europe and Canada, and then to the United States. "Enforcement at the border isn't always secure," says Nathalie Chabrier of World Wildlife Fund, "making Canada a good conduit to the United States."

The problem is not new. Back in 1973, alarmed by the impact of the commercial trade on populations of rare animals, wildlife experts drafted the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora—known as CITES. Today, Canada is one of 152 nations that are signatories to CITES, which, among other things, bans international trade in endangered species and attempts to

## EXOTIC PETS FOR SALE

Some wild animals are as easy to acquire, and occasionally as inexpensive, as common pets such as parrots, dogs or cats. But even truly exotic animals, including rare species, are readily available. Maclean's surveyed classified ads, online providers and pet shops and found the following animals available last week:



Weimaraner (imported in some parts of Canada)—\$30,000



Baby monkeys, marmosets, leopards and civet cats—\$2,500 to \$10,000



Catfish cichlids (in parent stage from Australia)—\$3,000



Green iguana (imported in some parts of Canada and South America)—\$40.99



Cougar—\$1,200



King cobra—\$300

tribe of dangerous animals, including venomous reptiles. The law would also prohibit the trading of some species including big cats such as lions and tigers, bears and crocodiles. Port Colborne, Ont., a tourist town southeast of Niagara Falls, had just seen the need to outlaw private ownership of wildlife until recently. "If we ban these pets, the problems won't go away—people will sell one of these animals," says Mayor Vance Badaway. Yet the city's council is scheduled to debate a new exotic-pet ban by law in the next few weeks. Why? Because of the arrival last year of Michael Baez, and his 50-

**can bite, but some exotic pets can have venom or even with deadly viruses.**



Byron Warnock, who retired Dragon Fairs last November. "And there is little presenting the animals from escaping to the street. Any number of scenarios can lead to a person touching or falling against mesh lids and being bitten. But, however, claims his collection poses no threat to the public because his snakes cannot escape. He also says the city is wrongly bullying him to close his doors. "They can't detain so me," he said. "It is simple as that."

Officers say for more escapes than their notice, and last year, Environment Canada said the federal Treasury Board to boost its wildlife staff to 165. The acquit was donated. "It's ludicrous," says Gary Colgan, Ontario chief of Environment Canada's wildlife enforcement division in Guelph, Ont. "Right now, we are not even scratching the surface. We just don't have the resources."

And to the trade drives. It is sometimes easier to buy poisonous reptiles, primates and wild cats than it is to buy some endangered birds or fish. These are Web sites that list exotic-animal associations, chat groups and forthcoming wildlife auctions in the United States and Canada. In last November's issue of *Animal Fosters Guild*, an American trade magazine, there were advertisements offering silver foxes for \$150 each, tiger cubs and coyote pups for \$450 each, a pair of Himalayan bears being bred at \$3,750 each and giant acheses were going for \$6,750

Even protected animals are easy to acquire. When a *Macdonald* reporter posing as a buyer, asked a Newfoundland-based dealer on the Internet how many he had on hand purchasing Canadian lynx, the dealer claimed he had access to 190 applicants, 23 of them in Canada, and as many as 25,000 cubs. He was willing to sell one fox as little as \$300, even though the trade in wild Canadian lynx is regulated under CITES. Callalans are not so regulated. Matthew Todd Papadopoulos, film producer in Maple Ridge who keeps cougars for a hit in his TV work, doubts that legislation can regulate the pet trade. "I will just create a black market," Papadopoulos says. "The animals will continue to be sold."



of one dangerous  
corner of a city block

CAZA represents only 23 zoos. There are about 170 quasi-zoo operations in Canada that are not accredited by CAZA. In an investigation last year of nine Alberta and Saskatchewan zoos by Zoocheck Canada Inc., a nonprofit organization that monitors captive wildlife, and the World Society for the Protection of Animals, all nine housed some animals in substandard



One once left in a cage without food or water for three weeks, the birds have died after enduring abuse from several owners.

dead conditions. And Lynn Gustafson, owner of GaaZoo Animal Farm in Three Hills, Alta., was convicted of illegally possessing Sika deer and cruelty to an animal. The cruelty conviction resulted in a \$300 fine and 30 days in jail, yet Gustafson was not stripped of his provincial zoo permit and continues to operate.

Some aspects of the trade are completely unregulated. There are no federal standards governing brands, and, not surprisingly, there is confusion over who is and isn't legal. One Stouffville brewer, Russell Hanson, who has sued Canadian and American lyes, recently decided to go out of the business. Last year, Hanson was falsely charged by Alberta wildlife officials with exporting Canadian lye into Alberta without permits, even though no law required him to have them. The charges were dropped, but not before Hanson's reputation was damaged and he had been made a target of militant anti-right-to-choose activists. At one point last year, RCMP officers warned him not to open mail from New York City because a group there was threatening to send large barrels to Canadian borders.

The perfect animal for the worst aspects of the pet trade could be Oso, a grizzly bear. Oso was captured as a cub in the wild after a hunter killed his mother. His first home in captivity was a travelling circus, where, like most performing bears, he was declawed and had his front teeth removed.

When he outgrew his cubby quarters, he was sold to a man in Sudbury, Ont., and when the man moved away, Oso was left behind, locked in a cage with no food or water.

Barely alive when he was discovered more than three weeks later, Oso was taken in and partially rehabilitated by people at Belleville, Ont., who then sold Oso to a collector. Over time, his weight dropped to 300 lb. from 750, and at one point in 1997, he was nearly sold for his organs. But he was rescued by Bear With Us, a sanctuary near Hartsville, Ont. "No matter what people up there do, they do an education value to owning wild[life]," says

**Michael McInnis, founder of Bear With Us:** "It's just a full-blown case of someone's ego."

**Last summer:** One died of a heart attack at age 15—less than half the usual lifespan of a grizzly. A veterinarian told the premature death was caused by years of abuse, although none of Oso's previous owners were ever charged. But that's how it goes in the wildlife trade. *Animals are often sold with little regard for their welfare, or for the safety of the public at large.* And without a serious commitment to legislative protection and enforcement in Canada, there is little hope for change.

Wish Book: Ashley in Vancouver



Parasitic the escape of one dangerous  
right toward the invasion of a city block

# Flesh and Bones

**Illicit sales of animal parts are putting species at risk**

By Susan McClelland

I would say getting the owner of the traditional Chinese medicine shop in Montreal to admit she sold bear gallbladders and items made with bear bile. "It's illegal to have those things," the pugnacious old Hsueh Yi, an undercover agent hired by the London-based World Society for the Protection of Animals. Being so a customer, Hsueh—who uses a pseudonym—persisted, talking at length about the medicinal benefits of products such as fu tan, fat of the musk deer or musk deer. Eventually, when the shopkeeper was convinced she had found a sincere buyer, she reached behind the counter and brought out cinnamon, bottles of oil and pills all made with bear bile. She even revealed the used-to-carry bear gallbladders. "But not anymore," Hsueh later told *Meatless*. "She did not know any Canadian hunters to buy them from."

The shopkeeper's initial disclosure is understandable. Revenues generated by selling a single product made with caribou antlers can run as high as five years in jail and fines up to \$150,000 in Canada. Yet Hsueh, who underwrote intensive undercover investigations in 20 shops in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia last fall, says she found that more than one-third of those sold medicines made with bear bile. She also claims that three shops sold bear gallbladders, which are used for a number of disorders including fever, skin lesions and pain relief. Two men even admitted the organs came from bears that had been poached in Canada, gallbladders sold for as much as \$800. "Sometimes the items were openly displayed on the shelves," says Hsueh.

The illicit trade in body parts isn't restricted to providing components for traditional medicines. There are countless dealers across Canada selling meat and bones and fur from poached or endangered species, and they are willing to risk the legal consequences because the demand is so strong. Wildlife clients around the world have paid as much as \$25,000 for a single shabrook chuan (made with the fat tail of the endangered Tibetan antelope). And buyers will pay top dollar for imported bushmeat, such as monkey from Africa or exotic fish. Then there's jewelry made from the skulls



Skulls of slaughtered Tibetan antelope: the true cost of raw skulls

of poached elephants, or chains handcrafted made from the skins of rare reptiles. It all adds up to a real trade that legal experts estimate to be worth millions every year in Canada, and billions worldwide. "It never ceases to surprise me how much of this I see or what people will do to make their profits," said a veteran federal Wildlife Service enforcement officer, who asked to remain anonymous.

The trade is as vast, in fact, that authorities sometimes make busts quite by accident. Just last December, officers of the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency in Halifax seized about 4,600 products made from elephants (mostly during a routine training exercise). As part of it, a seizure opened a warehouse that, so officials' gear suggests, contained bracelets, necklaces, earrings and carvings of elephants and Disney characters that were destined for sale in gift shops. An On-

tario man has been charged with importing the goods estimated to be worth as much as \$75,000. It is unknown whether the ivory was from African or Indian elephants, or how many animals died to provide the tusks.

The campaign against harvesting animals for these purposes is designed to protect endangered species. But generally it is a losing battle. The use of rhinoceros horn in Eastern medicine to treat fever and rheumatoid and in the Middle East for making decorative dagger handles has decimated rhinoceros populations. Similarly, every species of tiger and all bears in Asia, including the panda and Amur black bear, are declining rapidly because of the popularity of their skins as traditional Chinese medicines, and their bones and organs for medicinal use. Those animals are supposed to be protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The agreement, endorsed by 152 nations, prohibits the international sale of endangered species and their parts, and regulates the trade of other animals whose survival in the wild is at risk. Yet for many, the side rewards outweigh the costs.

Critics claim that Canada's position is contradictory. It is one of the only signatories of CITES, yet it does not control the measures to enforce the CITES standards. As well, Ottawa recently began to allow imports and now Canada has to import products made from CITES-protected animals. Except in a few instances, the exemption does not apply to live animals, but it does enable the importation of coral, shells, sea urchins and some products made from exotic skins including shabrook chuan and ivory, as long as the items are not for commercial sale. "Canada has opened yet another loophole for smuggling wildlife parts and products," says Nathalie Chaboulay of the Wildlife Fund. Wildlife Service officers, however, say the exemption was necessary. "When we spend most of our time confiscating source material, we can't focus on the people doing the illegal trading," says Gary Colgan, Ontario chief of Environment Canada's wildlife enforcement division. "We were forced to make a choice, the little guys or the larger importers and smugglers."

Domestically, dealers and poachers trade in native products, for local consumption as well as for export. It is illegal in every province to sell meat from wild mammals game such as moose and deer but it is widely available for sale. There is also a market for parts, such as bear paws for soup. No one is certain how many animals are being slaughtered for food and other illegal purposes. "We know bears are being killed, but we just don't know the magnitude because we aren't finding all the carcasses," says David Ward, co-ordinator of special investigations for Manitoba's ministry of natural resources. The penal-

ties are not a serious disincentive. Last spring in Surrey, B.C., two men who pleaded guilty to selling 18 bear gallbladders for medicinal use were fined only \$7,000 each and served only 17 days in jail. "His speaks to how we as society view animals," says Christine Montgomery, author of *Blood Relations: Animals, Humans and Politics*. "They are a very low priority."

That said, the majority of bear products sold in traditional Chinese medicine shops are smuggled in from Asia. In China, the sale of bear products is legal, and according to the Chinese ministry of forestry, there are 247 farms where thousands of bears are "reared" for their bile. Chinese authorities claim the bears are treated humanely, but recently they acknowledged that some smaller farms are run poorly. Undercover visitors shot last year at poorly operated farms in six Chinese provinces showed cages that were so small the animals could barely turn around. The bears exhibited aberrant social behaviour—eventually even admitted that mothers

Members of wildlife conservation groups who have visited these farms claim the majority of the animals die prematurely. Conservation groups also report that about 50 per cent of the bears die during the bile extraction process, which involves surgically inserting a tube into the animal's abdomen, often without the aid of a veterinarian or anaesthetic.

But at least these animals were used to make medicines. The majority of animals are slaughtered simply because the poachers and dealers can make a profit catering to the fashions and tastes of well-heeled consumers. Over the past few years, more than a hundred New York City socialites and celebrities, including fashion model Christine Brinkley, were subpoenaed to testify in a U.S. district court for buying shawls made of shabrook. Two dealers were convicted in January of trading the items, which many of the socialites purchased at a 1994 fund-raising event benefiting cancer.

To satisfy the demand for shabrook shawls, poachers annually kill an estimated 20,000 Tibetan antelope, known as chiru. They have to be skinned to gather the ultrafine wool that produces the soft, light and warm garments. As a result, populations of chiru have been decimated, falling to about 75,000 today from more than one million in 1960. Wildlife experts predict the animal could soon be extinct, and it's not difficult to understand why. It takes the skins of at least three chiru to produce a single shawl, and on any given day, there are hundreds of shawls available for sale. They sell for thousands of dollars—but the real cost is much higher. ■



Wildlife officers in Halifax with seized imports deemed to be wrong



Taget Secondary School.  
Teacher Horn (below left):  
"We're living in a scary world."

# How to React?

The jailing of a young author illustrates just how difficult it is for schools to deal with bullying

By Julian Beltrame in Cornwall, Ont.

From the beginning, it was a story too incredible to believe. In November, a gentle, sensitive boy, subjected to taunts and a vicious beating at the hands of school thugs, made up a story for his Grade 11 drama class. Titled *Twisted*, it is a story of a boy "at the brink of insanity and sanity," who envisions blowing up his school. A couple of weeks later, the 16-year-old is arrested for writing threats, kept in jail for more than a month, while the thugs who his parents claim beat him up go unpunished. Meanwhile, his 14-year-old brother is also arrested for issuing threats after being taunted on a school bus about his sibling. With little else known, the older brother becomes a cause célèbre. PRN Canada, the organization of writers, declares it a "choked shut a piece of fiction" has landed a messenger in jail. After the boy's lawyer, Frank Horn, "We're living in a scary world."

Last week, the world got a little less frightening for Canada's most celebrated anonymous author. Cornwall Justice of the Peace Bette Marchand released the youth, who cannot be identified, once the custody of his parents while he waits trial. One condition of the release was that he wear clear of Taget Secondary School

in Avonmore, a small town 15 km north of Cornwall where he has been registered since September. But the case that on its surface appeared to be an Orwellian overreaction by police and school officials got more complicated. There were also allegations that the youth graphically threatened three classmates after he wrote his now infamous story. Insured school-board trustee Art Buckland "We were not going to bring in the police simply because of a dramatic monologue of fiction."

Even the boy's father concedes school officials were handed a terrible situation. He told Michael both his sons were receiving psychological treatment for anger management before the arrests. He described his son as a troubled teen who had lost his friends in the new school, who he said had no friends in the new school, was subjected to taunts because of a slight speech impediment. In mid-November, he added, his son came home bloodied after being locked and punched by a group of bullies. Both sons had spent almost a year in a foster home in 1987 after he was convicted of breaking his daughter's wrist, an incident he believes convinced the Crown attorney's reluctance to release the boys to his custody. On the other hand, a police search of the



Photo by Peter G. Brown for The Canadian Press

horns found no weapons or explosives. "I think [the school officials] were afraid if they made the wrong decision and this is that one-in-a-million case where something happens," the father said, "they're going to be on the hot seat."

The Avonmore incident clearly illustrates the damaged-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't dilemma facing schools today following a spate of shootings in U.S. schools in the 1990s—culminating in the slaughter of 12 students and a teacher at Columbine high school in Colorado in April 1999, and the killing of a youth in Talbot, Alta., a week later—most schools in Canada adopted zero-tolerance policies towards violence. Noting that many students had exhibited warning signs of antisocial behaviour before striking out, the police call for school officials to intervene at the first indication of trouble.

"In today's world, we have to take every sign, every complaint, every year seriously," says Michael Jordan, principal of Ottawa's Canine Wilson high school, where last April a 15-year-old stabbed four classmates and a staff member. In some cases, in-school counselling may be sufficient. In others, students can face suspension or the involvement of the police. "The bottom line in our school is if you hit somebody you're suspended," Jordan said. "No question."

Still, the second of zero-tolerance policies is clearly at best. Violence incidents continue to mount, from the fatal stabbing of a 17-year-old student in Calgary last November to last month's incident in Callingswood, Ont., where a seven-year-old threatened two classmates with a knife. Inevitably, school officials say they are left to defend their failure to anticipate

violence, or, in the case of Taget, fend off charges of overreaction. Doug Hadley, spokesman for the Halton regional school board, recalls the ridicule directed at school authorities when a Halton-area student was suspended last year for throwing snowballs. "We have 58,000 students and we have to balance the individual's rights with the overall rights of the students to learn in a safe environment," he said.

The problem with zero-tolerance policies is not the intent but the execution, says York University psychologist Debra Pepler. Often consequences lack the resources to counsel troubled students who exhibit antisocial behaviour. And in most cases, the odds, authorities fail to detect the underlying cause of school violence—the bullying and teasing that drives victims to lash out against their tormentors. "Bullying is a serious problem in every school and the tragedy is that victims feel they have no place to turn," says Pepler. "In most cases, they're right, because if they report it, they can be subjected to more bullying."

Down Marie Wiley felt that way. Her mind of writing back, she chose an extreme and tragic response. In November, the Grade 9 student at Mission Secondary School in Vancouver wrote her parents a short note, then hanged herself. "If I try to get help, it will get worse," she wrote. "They are always looking for a new person to beat up and they are the toughest girls." She was not alone in believing suicide was preferable to continual victimization. A British Columbia study of 15 teenage suicides in 1997 and 1998 found that five had been victims of bullying. Pepler, director of the LaMarsh Centre for Research on Violence and Conflict Resolution, says her study of about 200 students in school-based situations found that teachers detect and take only about four per cent of bullying incidents. Yet adult intervention is crucial, she says. "Children are incapable of solving the problem because it's about power, and each time a bully picks on someone, the bully's power is enforced," Pepler explained. "It's understandable when victims stand back."

Who the young author of *Twisted* was the breaking point? Horn says a civil suit would have young, clear in quality at most of an overactive imagination, and that allegations he made shed threats will prove unfounded or exaggerated. "This is a typical kid," he said. "If they're going to get him in jail, there's a lot of other kids who will go to jail." Rather, says the father, he wants to leave the community as soon as he can all his home. He wants to move somewhere where his family will feel accepted, and his son can resume his passion for writing. "We need a fresh start."

With Ken McQueen in Vancouver and John DeLore in Halifax

## 'HE DECIDED TO DETONATE AT 12:12'

Excerpts from the essay that resulted in a Cornwall, Ont., area high school student being charged with attempting death threats.

There's this boy who has been harassed and tormented all his life and all he was at the brink of insanity and all he did was read that was always come on his back, teachers, principal, but most of all the other students.

No matter how hard he tried there was always something wrong with him in their eyes. He tried and tried, he really did. Then he came to learn with his life and realized that he didn't fit in.

Anyway, one day he went to class in a bad mood, he had been pushed really hard that day I suppose they had no idea what he was thinking about because I'm sure if they did they would have backed off really, really quickly.

The next day he came to school he was super happy, bouncing along in a

hyperactive mood, he laughed at the stupid jokes, pretending not knowing they were insults I guess that no one knew he had eaten up at 5 in the morning and had jammed the lock in one of the [school's] back doors. In addition, in the bag he was carrying 13 packages of C-4 and a detonator I guess he had been stashing them under the garbage bags in the back, but packages under in tables in the cafeteria, mostly in high traffic areas. Apparently, he kept one strapped to his chest just in case the others were found. Luckily for him none were found.

He went happily along waiting for the right moment. He decided to detonate at 12:12 p.m. exactly. Everyone would be having lunch and having fun



Brian D. Johnson

# Testosterone freak show

Anyone curious to know what sort of mind Madonna chose to marry last month might want to take a peek at *Snatch*, the hot new movie by Guy Ritchie. If Madonna is the campy, fashion-obsessed, over-the-top pop culture's sexual seductress, her new husband is the megalomaniacal director with the lust word in burlesque violence—England's answer to Quentin Tarantino. *Snatch* zooms by like Tarantino on amphetamines. A better-voiced ride through the crude vernacular of British gangsterism, this movie is not directed so much as deliried.

After the cult success of his 1998 feature, the frenzied *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*, Ritchie had Hollywood knocking at his door. But he turned down offers to direct *Charlie's Angels* and *Goze* in *Sixty Seconds* and stayed home to make another small-time, madcap comedy set in the London underworld. *Snatch* explodes with the same bawdy energy as *Lock, Stock*, but it's a better film, with a richer ensemble cast. And its secret weapon is Brad Pitt—who earned double roles in *Almond Eternity* and *The Legend of Nigger Vase* to scarf up his pretty-boy image and work for a director whose entire budget was less than half the astronomical \$20-million (U.S.) fee.

Secret move: Playing a bare-knuckled boxer, Pitt is not just reprising his role in *Fight Club*. As an Irish gypsy who speaks in a hilariously incomprehensible accent, he gives the showstop performance of his career. These days, apparently, there's nothing cooler for an American actor than to be an Irish gypsy—Johnny Depp plays one in *Chocolat*.

Ritchie, meanwhile, has made the ultimate Guy Movie, a macho-comedy of errors in which there are no good guys, just criminals who come in various shades of stupid and cruel, smothering each other up in a DeWolfean free-for-all. Despite the vulgar promise of the title, there are virtually no women. *Snatch* refers to a diamond. The plot is a convoluted involving dogfights, illegal boxing matches, a huge stolen diamond and a sinister American bookie gangster. They include an American jewel thief named Frenky Fear Fingers (Bernie Del Toro), the ruthless Ari (Dennis Hopper), his Jewish boss in

**Guy Ritchie's  
*Snatch* zooms by  
like Tarantino on  
amphetamines**

New York, Brat The Blade (Bade Serbedzija), a Russian gangster who is "in heat as the Soviet nicks and as hard as the hammer that crosses it"; a trio of bumbling black men who try to rob him; a pair of novice boxing promoters who ask Pitt's uncontrollable gypsy to take a fall in a boxing match; and

underworld kingpin Brick Top (Alan Ford), who likes to kill men with his dogs and feed them to his pigs—"they go through bones like butter." The onslaught of hard stereotypes may not be everyone's taste. But Ritchie's script colors them with a savage wit. When Ari calls Roscoe "trem-Schnee, slippery, Connick shit," somehow the joke goes beyond racism. And most of the humor is at the expense of the English, with their bewildering jumble of dialects. ("I thought this country spawned the E—y language," growls Ari, "and no one nobody seem to speak it.") In fact, the two scenes who seal this sub-barely British movie are Americans—Pittian, flying in from Elaine Leonard and Pitt, sending up the whole business of soccer by being pervently understandable.

Watching *Snatch* is like listening to rap by Eminem. Trying to decode the machine-gun dialogue, and sort out the ethics, is part of the fun. Ritchie also uses surrealistic images to mix his images. Against techno dance music, he cuts between a board chasing a fox through a meadow and two DeBerrones covering a black man in a pin—a throwaway parody of English class society that could not be more accurate.

You can see why Madonna, queen of arrivants, loves the guy. Like a Jarrovin horse on the loose in the Old World, he has rounded her vowels, declared England to be more civilized than America, and in Ritchie found her prince, an antisocialist dropout who grew up fueling and has now skunked his way to the top. In *Snatch*, he pays her a working-class homage using song. Lady *Snatch* plays on the car radio while the driver drags a man along the sidewalk, his head caught in the window. *Chickadee* doesn't get any better than that. No wonder Robert De Niro, who has brought a \$7-million pad in London, finds the place so appealing.



## Theatre

# Lost in a dreary maze with Larry

## Larry's Party

*Book and lyrics by Richard O'Connor  
Music by Mark Norman  
Directed by Helen Mirren*

Three years ago, Carol Shields published a novel called *Larry* that quickly rose to the top of the best-seller list. In her, Larry Willet, a regular Winnipeg guy of the baby-boom generation. His story—marriage, fatherhood, divorce, sickness, the search for meaning—could be anybody's story, except for one thing: Larry makes names big, garden-sized names constructed of glands. Only rich people and emperors can afford them, so Larry obviously does very well for himself, though his private life, especially his love life, does not run so smoothly. Yet Larry's story has a happy ending, for he finally reaches the peaceful coast of the name of his own existence. In the final chapter, he enjoys a 50th birthday party at which he recalls the blondest years behind him, and reconnects with an important lost love. As far as anyone can find clarity in this life, Larry does.

This effective life would hardly seem to be the stuff of a musical, the most

boisterous of all art forms. But that hasn't stopped the veteran writing team of Richard O'Connor and Mark Norman from turning *Larry's Party* into one. Their work had its much-anticipated world premiere in Toronto last week (it will move on to Ottawa and Winnipeg later in the year), in a seemingly but troubled production directed by Robert Phillips. Perhaps the greatest

## Script and score troubles mar a much-anticipated musical

director of Shakespeare in Canada, Phillips has taken what the Bard has taught him and applied it to *Larry's Party*. The set, designed under Phillips' guidance by Thomas Als, is minimal: just a few platforms with a few tall, translucent screens that can be manipulated to suggest a house interior, a restaurant, a stage. The scenes flow swiftly into one another, as they do in Shakespeare, with the words and body language of the score scores creating an emotional and symbolic landscape that

*Carver and Baskin, the producers of the production's first show-stopping moments*

the audience is expected to help imagine. This aspect of the show works superbly. Phillips has not just directed the show, he has choreographed it. Backed by the beautiful, late-20th-century tones of Janice Linday's costumes, the cast sustains a complicated dance in which not a gesture is wasted.

Why, then, is *Larry's Party* such a disappointment? After all, the title role features Brent Carver, a Tony Award winner on Broadway and arguably the best musical performer in the country. He gives Larry a dithering, bumbling, melancholic sincerity that turns him, at one and the same time, into a recognizable Joe and an everyman caught in the vortex of a seemingly indifferent universe. And yet except for a few isolated moments (like his delectably angry delivery of the song *Secret After Flight*, Carver never manages to set this role on fire. The problem lies with both script and score. *O'Connor* deals out as many linguistic, psychological and dramatic details that a land of dreamless deserts. (One of his lyrics keeps repeating the line, "I know the tough get going when the going gets too tough," as if adding the word "too" somehow makes the old new new.) And Norman's attempt to summarize the musical's styles popular during Larry's life has resulted in a pleasant but largely generic-sounding melody. *Fifteen Minutes*, one of his better songs, is painfully similar to a piece from the recent musical *Rent*.

*Larry's Party* does have its triumphs, especially the scene where the widowed Charlotte (Barbara Banky), a new friend of Larry's, tells him of her lonely life. "I wear my scarf, I watch my weight, I make my sign," Banky sings while sitting stiffly in a bad mood. Here, music and lyrics are fresh, while Banky's plaintive, clear delivery evokes all the heroines, pious and strange comedy of human isolation. If *Larry's Party* had a few more such show-stopping moments, it might have been the coldest war to be intended to be rather than the thing it is.

John Benbow



Pitt: as our Irish gypsy, he gives his showstop performance yet





Actors Peter Paige, Neil Patrick Harris, and Scott Lowell. *Queer in North America* features these actors.

## Queer in North America

It may have the same premise and in-your-face sex scenes as the British gay soap of the same name, but there the similarities end. The North American version of *Queer as Folk*, which Showcase will premiere on Jan. 22 at 10 p.m., has a fluffier feel than its transatlantic counterpart. Like the original, the show is

and an emphasis on the sociopolitical gay lifestyle of casual sex and drugs. It's set in workshop-class Pittsburgh, but was shot entirely in Toronto—around the intersection of Church and Wellesley Streets, Canada's gay capital.

Susan Oh

## Go East, young cowpokes

Canada's Wild West is going to Hong Kong. The Calgary Stampede is sending a 37-member delegation to march in the territory's new year's parade on Jan. 24. The group features native dancers and clowns, cowpokes, VIPs—including Alberta Premier Ralph Klein—and a 19-yr-

ling cowboy, complete with a mechanized muscle-swinging bull. "We had the first blessing by a Tourist monk and by an aboriginal medicine man for safe journey," says Michelle Dubois, project coordinator. The annual parade draws crowds of up to 200,000 along its route and is watched by 1.2 billion TV viewers. "We're into East in a marketing opportunity as big as the Stampede itself."



Lower protesters in Beijing. *Fearful* shows how the Chinese government's actions affect the lives of its citizens.

## Inside a massacre

The Chinese government calls it a "slaughter" fabrication, but for its editors, *The Tiananmen Papers* (SheepColumbia) is the first public account of what led up to the June night in 1989 when troops crushed students' led pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. American academics Andrew Nathan and Perry Link say their book is crafted from hundreds of internal government and party documents smuggled out to them by a reform-minded Chinese official. The material shows how many of the Communist Party were open to dialogue with the students, something that might have prevented thousands of deaths, but an informal council of eight so-called elders held off by "patronage leader" Deng Xiaoping, frightened at the possibility of losing control of the country, made the fatal choice of a military crackdown.

## V-Day, the play

Award-winning playwright Eve Ensler was a woman's advocate for 20 years before she started a cultural phenomenon with *The Vagina Monologues*, the 1996 off-Broadway play that went on to become a global hit. And Ensler's activism continues. The writer has used her success—the play is a sellout hit in Toronto that will go on tour to Vancouver, Winnipeg, Ottawa, and Montreal later this year—to raise funds for women in need. The box office from one so-called V-Day performance in each run goes to agencies that help women recovering



Ensler's *everybody with a vagina* is a success.

from violence. Ensler, 47, the adoptive mother of *The Playwrights* Dylan McDermott, survived a childhood of sexual and physical abuse. "Women have to tell their stories, and the relief in telling a palpable," says the actress, whose play *Namany's Regret*—about Bosnian refugees—will open in London in March. "I survived by believing I could have an impact on the world. 'Writing kept my sanity.'"

## Pop Movies

1. *Lost Boys* (12A) \$122,148
2. *Twister* (14A) \$121,584
3. *What Women Want* (12A) \$101,106
4. *Wild Supercop* (14A) \$101,052
5. *Twisted Metal* (14A) \$100,853
6. *The Faculty* (12A) \$98,023
7. *The Grapes of Wrath* (14A) \$84,427
8. *Crashville* (14A) \$81,404
9. *Beaver: How the Beavers Got Their Name* (14A) \$77,953
10. *Body Women* (14A) \$48,025

The movies in Canada, based on weekly box office receipts during the week that ended on Jan. 10. In brackets: number of screens/weeks showing.

## Mysterious ocean

The North Pacific was the last ocean on Earth to be fully charted by Westerners. And it's award-winning water and novelist Terry Glavin shows in *The Last Great Sea* (Greyhound), a series of essays to unravel many of its secrets. Prime



among them is the ocean's compelling human story. Instead of Indians and Asians, some anthropologists now see words of migration creating a broad cultural arc from Japan to northern California, made of societies more dependent on fish than any other in human experience. That brings Glavin to the salmon, the true key species of the North Pacific. "When the glaciers began to recede at the end of the last ice age, it was the salmon that led the way to retooling the coastline, their bodies providing the nutrients for everything else—fishes, insects, bears, birds and people."

## Best Sellers

1. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, John (in French) 1
2. *AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 2
3. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 3
4. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 4
5. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 5
6. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 6
7. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 7
8. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 8
9. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 9
10. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 10

## Nonfiction

1. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 1
2. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 2
3. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 3
4. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 4
5. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 5
6. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 6
7. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 7
8. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 8
9. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 9
10. *THE AMERICAN SUPERHERO*, Michael (in French) 10

The movies in Canada, based on weekly box office receipts during the week that ended on Jan. 10. In brackets: number of screens/weeks showing.

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Allan Fotheringham

## Ladies' night at the theatre

**There is,** as Joe Allen's on this Thursday night, a palpable buzz, an excited frisson of anticipation running throughout the room. Joe Allen is a well-known hunk on the Durdash, Toronto's Greek enclave, and practically all the tables are filled with four women, two women, three women, excited about what they are about to learn about their anatomy.

Two doors away, sharp at 8 p.m., is *The Virgin Machine*, the stage presentation that helped cost New York City's mayor his wife and, now on the road, will play forever wherever there are females caring, as it were, out of the

diest. Oh that someone would do the same for the poor, benighted male. The show will move, March 6 to 25, to Vancouver and April 10 to 15 to islanded Winnipeg, where—rumour has it—the local star onstage will be caber Shanon Curran or Jack Johnson, both members of Canada's Senate, which could use a little sex.

The venue, the venerable Music Hall, has rich red walls that, when you come to think about it, are entirely appropriate to the subject. The joint is packed, the balcony overflowing, the few seats in the audience seeming to be dominated by the boys who sit in rows.

Present company: for the nonstop 90-minute performances are two experienced American actresses, blond Sheri Parker Lee and Afro-American Shari Benford. Backing, for this world's run, naughty Newfie Mary Webb, star of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *The Hour* (Feb. 22 Mon).

The attraction, naturally—the audience being almost solely female—is the discussion about “down there.” It’s a natural evolution from, several decades back, when Germaine Greer published her groundbreaking *The Female Eunuch*, advising women to squat over a mirror and see what it actually looked like.

It will take decades, one predicts, before someone will have the bravery to mount *The Piss Monologues*, considering its worldwide audience is largely populated by frightened male customers who stare in walking around with a strangulating rope around their necks, covering a dull shirt. Men of the world *win!* You have nothing to lose but your inhibitions.

These ladies, this evening, have no such scruples. To the delight of the expectant audience, the performers get right down to the grit. The actual word, *vagina*, "sounds like an in-



fiction at best. "The ladies in the balcony are already whooping and hollering."

The performance ring, the changes, going through the geographical differentiations of the name of the forbidden territory. Some productions call it Pussy Car. In Philadelphia (the home of the construction, after all), it is the "Sweet Connection." The sold-out house is screaming and shouting.

Those are instructions to the few males in the crowd: "No, over there!" "Enter at your own risk." "Slow down." A favorite male, doached in his paw biding behind his wife,

wishes only that some Andy Warhol, Marcel, whoever, could deliver such pungent advice to the gender that walks around in the

Incidentally, there is the release from the last taboo—the F-word now heard in every schoolyard and cocktail party—and the G-word. Along easy on it is revealed. That brought down the house (which has already craved for the mandatory standing ovation in the final curtain). We go through the educational censors manual. "Why do you need a handspan when you have a semi-automatic sounder?"

The star team (left to Stern Parker Lee), is demonstrating for about 15 minutes the 18 different moves during organ, ranging from The Jesus to The Waa to The Southern

Beils, The Dog (3), The Zen and The Dogs—all accompanied by body language that would be X-rated. By this time they were laughing and sitting in the expensive seats, staring under the dog who knew all those jerks they had once dated.

**The sadness**, being outnumbered in this sense, is that some frightened soul on Broadway has not pre-empted this hit with *The Penis Monologues*. Philip Roth, with his bewilder on the joys of male masturbation, broke new ground with his confessions about doing it to the lover he found in his mother's fridge and, later, in the evening, finding it was his own sister.

The male needs a playwright to free him from his upper-class, as New York playwright Don Ender has done with this hilarious farce of "down there." New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani was rumored to have a squeeze, a member of his staff, and his wife humiliated him by volunteering to become one of the first onstage at *The Virginie Monologues* debut. By then, he had fled for a legal immigration. Good for her.



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